



VOCALS



***“If you can talk, you can sing,
If you can walk, you can dance”***

-Proverb from Zimbabwe

The voice is the most personal means of musical expression. Coming directly from inside our bodies, singing requires us to be at our most vulnerable and exposed - there is no hiding! For this reason, we must be extremely careful with our students and strive to create a classroom community of unconditional support and acceptance. With the proverb above in mind, one should aim for a non-competitive “no judgment zone” where every student is equally entitled to the joyful experience of singing. One should focus on “singing for expression” rather than “singing for perfection,” and on the process over the product.

One of the central tenets of Music as a Second Language is that if students feel judged and their “Affective Filter” is high, they will not retain information and will perceive an experience negatively. Furthermore, a perceived failure with singing often leads students to abandon music completely, believing that they are simply not musical. Contrary to their belief, studies have shown that struggling to match pitch is mostly a neurological control issue and not an issue of perception. Sean Hutchins of BRAMS (International Laboratory for Brain, Music and Sound Research) conducted a research study where non-musicians were able to use both physical sliders to match pitch as well as their voices. While only 40% were able to match pitch with their voices, 100% were able to do so with the sliders. “People were hearing the right notes,” explains Hutchins, “While the trained musicians were quicker, all of the participants could accurately match the notes.” He calls this an Imitative Deficit where the perception of the tone is correct, and the right message is sent to the brain, but the

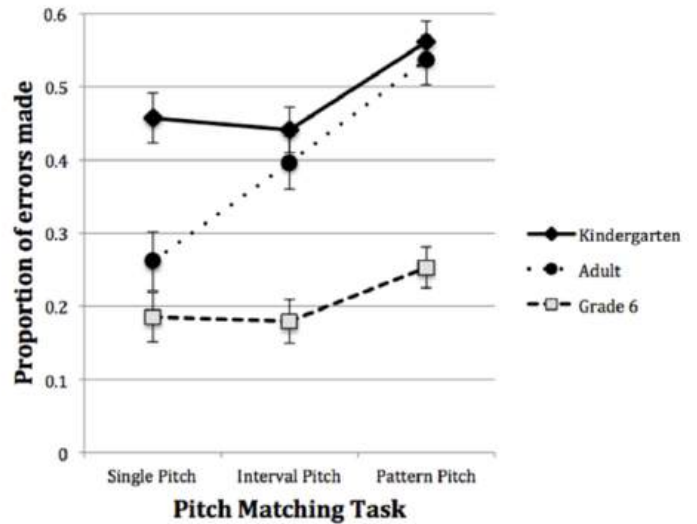
VOCALS

brain's ability to recreate it is lacking. He also explains that subjects can improve with practice (Dziedzinski, 2014, p. 1). This was confirmed in a study by the research of Steven Demorest and Peter Pfordreshe, showing that on average, 6th graders matched pitch far better than both kindergarteners and college students (Khazan, 2015, p. 1). This demonstrates that practice is key to improving, while there is also an element of "use it or lose it" to singing, as with all physical skills!

In light of this fact, it is deeply saddening how many people think that they are not able to sing or play music because of a single negative experience in their youth. Perhaps a choral teacher said they were tone deaf, had a bad ear, or they sounded too nasally. Perhaps, in a culture where singing is seen as an act reserved only for professionals, a child was made fun of by their peers or even a family member. We believe that until students feel completely at ease and naturally drawn to the process of singing, one should not yet begin to address technique and quality. This will send the "monitor" (see chapter on Music As a Second Language) into overdrive and distance many students for not only their days under your direction, but even a lifetime.

Long before the Rock and Roll belting of Little Richard and Steven Tyler or the catchy rapping of Eminem and Jay Z, people were using their voices to express themselves musically as part of everyday life, throughout the world. Long before the Grammy Awards, Hollywood, American Idol and Choral Competitions, singing provided a way for all people to come together, share an experience, and be a part of something larger than one's self. Although we may still sometimes experience this at an occasional sporting event, religious service or special holiday, we have a long way to go to undo much of this false perception that music making is reserved for a select few. We hope the cultural shift we need will begin its tilt in public school classrooms just like yours!

Errors Made While Singing



Music Perception

From *The Atlantic* (Khazan, 2015, p. 1)

1. Dziedzinski, J. (2014, June 23). Can't Sing? Blame Your Brain. *Discover*, 1. Retrieved from: <http://discovermagazine.com/2014/julyaug/11-singing-in-the-brain>
2. Khazan, O. (2015, Feb. 10). Everyone Can Sing. *The Atlantic*, 1. Retrieved from: <http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2015/02/everyone-can-sing/385340/>

Vocals in Modern Band

Singing, Rapping and Beatboxing

In addition to singing, the voice may be used in Modern Band for rapping, making sound effects, and beatboxing. Each of these uses has its own set of techniques and challenges, a young but rich history, and is an art form that can continue to be developed over the course of a lifetime! It is important that we do not avoid these topics because of our inexperience with them. Oftentimes a simple introductory experience can be the only thing a student needs to embark on his or her own path.

Singing Voices Are As Individual

As Our Fingerprints

Take a listen to singers as diverse as Aretha Franklin, Elvis, Jack White, Enrique Iglesias, Courtney Love, and Beyoncé. Among these popular singers heard on our radio stations during the last half-century or so, you will immediately discover that each possesses a very unique voice used to express their individuality. Some of the characteristics that make them differ from each other are tone, diction, and style, but what sets them apart the most is their personality! This is something that we cannot give to a student, but can only help to draw out.

Imitate; Then Innovate!

Another challenge that music educators face is in helping young singers to find and embrace their “natural” singing voice. Anyone who has worked with children or young musicians will agree that much of what they learn comes through imitation. As master imitators, they will gravitate towards sounding like their favorite artists, even if it is physically unnatural and in some cases even detrimental. However, this is a normal bridge to self-discovery, and it is our job to celebrate these efforts while also reminding them of the importance of sounding like themselves. This approach to teaching singers fosters individuality and also promotes healthy technique and good habits right from the start.

Sing It, Then Play It

Singing helps us become aware of issues like tuning and timing in a way that playing an instrument just cannot. It also allows us to connect to sound on the most visceral level. The voice is guided by the ear, mind and heart all at once with no middleman. The playing of an instrument is often only guided by a technical knowledge of what buttons to press and finger motions to make at what time. Even college students who major in instrumental music have to spend several semesters singing in different ensembles because of this fundamental insight that only singing can provide. There are lots of great singers who could not tell you a single thing about how they do what they do or what they are even doing. Their relationship to music is completely intuitive. To foster this deep physical connection to music, it is important that we provide opportunities to sing for all music students!



A New Model

In traditional choral ensembles, a large group of students sing in unison or a specific part within their section (altos, sopranos, tenors, etc.). Often times the appropriate goal of the music teacher is to get all students to sound the same so that together they will be as one. This means that their diction is consistent, that notes are held for the same duration, that no liberties are taken with the melody such as bending up or down into a note or reinterpreting the rhythm, and that there is an ideal tone. Students will usually stand tall and straight with arms to their sides and not break pose through the duration of the song. There are many great things to be said for this kind of musical setting, for both its participants and the audience, and its power is undeniable.

However, the goals for a singer in a Modern Band setting will be very different than in a traditional choral ensemble. The reasons become apparent when we reflect on the way people sing in popular music groups of the past few decades: they belt, they wail, they growl, they whisper, they scream, they bend, they improvise, they are sometimes nasally, sometimes guttural, other times smoky, always emotional, often out of tune, and they exude individuality and charisma. Some of the most celebrated singers in popular music may have a voice that couldn't pass a chorus audition, but are celebrated for qualities such as authenticity, intention, passion and honesty. Modern Band backup singers, similar to members of a traditional choral ensemble, must be in sync and as one, but often may be dancing or doubling up on percussion, keyboard, or guitar!

Bringing together a Modern Band ensemble with a traditional chorus can yield amazing results! You may have the chorus sing the refrain, while a lead singer, or a small core of lead singers handle the verses in a way that is free of the restrictions that come with large group singing.

Approximation, Scaffolding, and Differentiation – 7 Tips

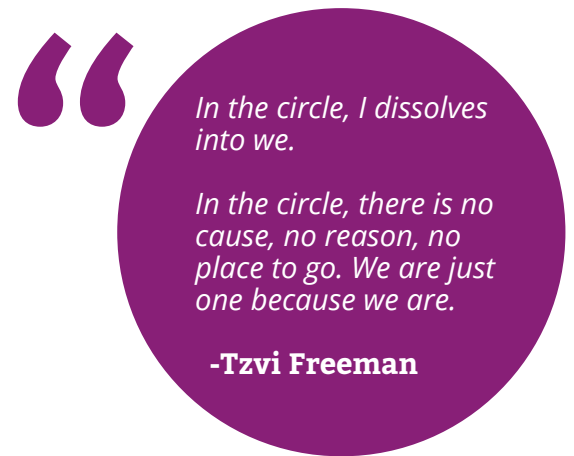
At their core, popular songs have only two components: a melody, and lyrics. Although it may offend many instrumentalists, the chord structure, riffs and other musical components are considered almost incidental, even in copyright law. The great thing about this is that it allows popular songs to so easily be reinterpreted while remaining recognizable! As long as you include the melody and words, you can complicate it or simplify it however you wish! You can play it with just one guitar or a 15-piece band but if the melody and words are there, the song remains the same! This makes it extremely easy to differentiate to the abilities or stylistic interests of instrumental Modern Band students. However, if the melody is the core of the song and what makes it recognizable, then there is the



least room for differentiation with singing, right? Not true. By using the knowledge of your students and taking a student-centered approach, vocals can become as easily differentiated as guitar or keyboard.

Here are seven ways to help all of your students succeed:

- 1 **Proximity:** Many students can match pitch only when singing along with a song or by listening to another classmate. They need a “reference.” Others may struggle to project their voices. Remedy this by surrounding these students with your most independent and confident singers. Position the strong ones directly behind and to the sides of those that need a reference or a sense of safety. Stand in a tight circle whenever possible to create a sense of unity.
- 2 **Choice of Repertoire:** Although your students should play a large role in choosing your repertoire, take into account the range between the lowest and highest note of the song, and the range of the student(s) that will be singing it (more on this later).
- 3 **Transposition:** Transpose the song to the ideal key for the student(s) singing it, taking into account the lowest and highest note. See our tech section for details on how to transpose audio files to a new key.
- 4 **Modify the Melody:** If there are a few notes that are outside of the range of your students, you can change them without making the song unrecognizable!
- 5 **Approximate Other Parts:** Create simple “oos” or “aghs” using the root notes of the chords that students can sing in the background. You can also find a guitar or keyboard riff in the song that your singers can imitate.
- 6 **Solo and Choral Singing:** For the more advanced singers, give them a lead role on more difficult repertoire or during a song’s verses, while the rest of the group joins in for the chorus. You can also split up the singing roles within a song based on each section’s difficulty or range. If it fits, allow non-singer students to create a rap section.
- 7 **Harmonizing:** Many of your students will struggle with harmony and as a multi-tasking Modern Band teacher you might not have the time to dedicate to developing harmonized vocal parts. However, some of your more advanced singers can work on this challenge independently or in small groups with the help of an audio recording or notated transcription that you create, or by picking out harmonies on their own.

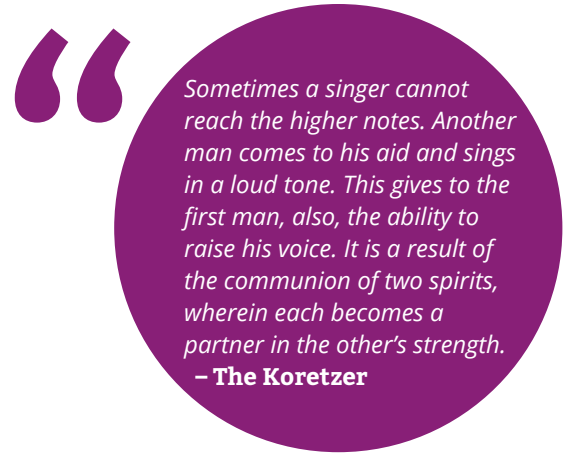


Creating a Safe Space for Singing – 7 Tips

Although it is important to create a joyful, inviting and low anxiety environment as a foundation for music making on all instruments, it is especially important when it comes to the voice. Singing is the most personal musical expression a student can make. Unlike strumming a guitar, pressing keys or hitting drums, it involves the direct production of sound from their body and it requires the expression of their emotions. Consequently, many students avoid singing because of the vulnerability it makes them feel. Here are

some tips for creating a safe space and minimizing their affective filters:

- 1 **Don't call it singing** at first. Saying, "We are going to sing now," makes it seem like a big deal and often creates unnecessary anxiety. Simply saying "repeat after me" will get most students to follow. Non-pitched chanting is another way to make the transition from speaking to singing more seamless.
- 2 **Celebrate approximation**, especially with new singers. For a student to try is a big successful leap forward! If you say it's not good enough, it will be perceived by them as a failure and can undermine their confidence, in some cases, for a lifetime.
- 3 **Focus on expression** instead of perfection. "You guys are really getting into this song and enjoying yourselves, which makes me so happy!" as opposed to, "Wow, listen to how those three girls in the back are able to hit that high note without going flat!"
- 4 **Avoid trying to force a student to sing**, which is more or less corporal punishment! Instead, encourage them to sing. You should reward participation but avoid giving negative consequences for a student refusing to sing.
- 5 **Try to use positive narration** with individuals and the group. During a singing activity, verbally acknowledge students displaying desirable behaviors, instead of giving attention to those who are not.
- 6 **Create and enforce classroom rules of engagement that foster mutual support and acceptance.** Example: "No one ever has to apologize for an honest mistake," "Critique is only welcomed when it is asked for," "Applause is mandatory whenever someone sings a solo."
- 7 **Do lots of warm ups and singing games** to loosen up the body, voice, and spirit, and bridge the gap between not singing and singing. See below for some great examples!



Sing Close Together and In a Circle

Singing in a circle and close together allows the weaker singers to better hear, and be lifted by the stronger ones. It is also the best way to experience the togetherness that makes singing in groups so wonderful! This will help create a community that celebrates music as a process to be shared and not as a product to be judged! In addition, it is a student centered approach that does away with the teacher as leader or judge, and allows all to feel of equal importance. "In the circle," says Tzvi Freeman, "I dissolves into we."

Song Selection

Like it or not, your class's opinion of you as a music teacher mostly revolves around the repertoire you select for them to perform. While every music teacher can recall a vast library of songs from their own personal journey, they should also recall what it was like to be in their students' shoes. The songs students choose to sing reflect their emerging identities and are also an outward expression of their emotions. That being said, it's highly recommended that every Modern Band teacher consult the following checklist when considering songs for their students:

___ Does the song **leverage their cultural capital**?

- ___ Is the song **relevant** to their lives?
- ___ Is the song in a **good key** for everyone in the band?
- ___ Are the **lyrics** of the song appropriate?
- ___ If the song is older than the students, do they understand **why** they are learning it, and do they **want** to play it?

Leveraging the cultural capital of our students doesn't have to be as complicated as it sounds. Culture implies more than just ethnicity. It encompasses community, age, beliefs, trends and customs. For example, just because a teacher works in a Hispanic community doesn't mean the students will have an intrinsic interest in Hispanic music. One is missing the mark by basing song selection on historic cultural contributions of his or her students' ethnic backgrounds. The best way to be student centered is to learn about the student as an individual in the here and now, which will in turn teach you many things about the culture with which they identify.

Determining the relevance of a song is easier to do when a teacher involves his or her students. At the start of the school year, music teachers everywhere can expect to get approached by students who are eager to share new song ideas. Listening to their suggestions is a great way to get into their culture, gauging the general direction they would like to go in. Listening to a popular radio station for a day or consulting an Internet "Top 40 Playlist" are two additional ways to sample the popular culture. However, it goes without saying that it is also the job of the teacher to screen how much of that culture is allowed into the classroom.

Picking good keys for songs is the most important aspect of song selection for a Modern Band. The teacher not only considers a key that is good for the instruments, but the notes of the song must also be comfortable for the singers. Part of this process involves avoiding difficult keys for guitarists, including keys that involve playing too many barre chords (consider getting a classroom set of capos to alleviate this challenge). For keyboard players, avoiding keys that require too many sharps and flats is the goal. Most importantly, teachers must consider the vocal range of the singers and how it fits in with the highest and lowest note of the song and where the majority of the notes fall. If it doesn't fit, do not be afraid to change the key of song!

Screening a song's lyrics can be one of the most challenging aspects of directing a Modern Band. On one hand, students enjoy selecting songs that are contemporary and relevant. On the other hand, children are not always aware of the meaning of the lyrics they are busy memorizing. While there are certain circumstances in which the removal of a word can make a song appropriate, there are just as many instances whereby the inappropriate meaning of a song is embedded in too many lyrics to be revisable. Teachers must be careful to listen to songs in advance, screening the inappropriate lyrics and looking further into the meanings of new catch phrases.

Lastly, when teachers are presenting new music to students, they often forget to explain why they have chosen the music. Instead of beginning a lesson by saying "today we are learning a song that I



liked when I was your age," a teacher may want to begin by saying "today we are going to learn a song that will teach you a Punk Rock drum pattern." When students know why they are doing something and why it is important, they are more likely to become emotionally invested.

Connecting the Voice With Instruments

Other instruments can aid in helping to find and match pitch, create a vocal melody, or write a song. On the other hand, singing can help instrumentalists form a deeper connection with their instrument and play in a more lyrical way. Here are some ways to combine instruments and other Modern Band resources with singing:



Visit the Guitar, Bass, and Keyboard sections for more info.

Guitar and Bass

Singers can try to play notes in a scale chart and individual notes in a chord diagram while singing them at the same time. This connection will serve to make their playing more lyrical and expressive while also helping them with pitch matching and internalizing diatonic harmony. Many great guitar and bass soloists are known to often play what they sing, and sing what they play, at the same time (George Benson, Jimi Hendrix, Esperanza Spalding)! Have your students create or learn simple licks that they can sing and play at the same time! This will get them seeing the instrument as an extension of singing and not just a bunch of lines, frets, and boxes.

A "Capo" is a clamp that attaches onto your guitar neck and presses down on all the strings, changing the location of the first fret of your guitar. It is an essential tool for any singer who also plays guitar and every classroom that combines guitar with singing should have them. With just a simple slide of the capo up or down a fret, a singer can play the same chords but be in a key better suited for his or her voice. See the guitar section for an explanation on how to use them.

Keyboard

Use Jam Cards with keyboards to teach students how to find vocal harmony, and as a practice tool for singing. If a singer knows a chord progression in one key and wants to find the best key for his or her voice, give them Jam Card #6A and have them find the ideal key for their voice on any given song that they can play on piano in any other key!



I Can't Hear Myself!

Making Sure Your Singer is Heard Clearly

As was explained above, a vocal melody and the accompanying words are what define a song. For this reason, it should always be a priority to make sure your singers are heard loud and clear, above all else! This can often be a difficult task in an electric ensemble or with a loud drum kit!

In addition, if your singers cannot hear themselves, they will overexert their voice, which can irritate and damage their vocal chords. They will also be out of tune, and may feel very uncomfortable, possibly leading to a traumatic experience. Being it is already such a vulnerable position for a young singer to be in, it is important that we do everything possible to prevent this from happening! If your musicians cannot hear themselves or each other, they will be off beat, feel detached, and may be playing the wrong notes or chords! Following are some tips to prevent these things from happening.

Using Microphones and a PA System

A PA System (Public Address System) is what provides amplification for microphones. The one we currently offer for our teachers is called the Fender Passport. Most have three components: A mixer (mixing console), an amplifier, and speakers. Many speakers today are already “powered” which means they are an amplifier and speaker in one. Although “mixers” are not necessary for all PA applications, they can allow for connecting multiple microphones along with electronic keyboards, bass guitars, acoustic electric guitars, MP3 players and computers. “Mixers” may also be “powered,” eliminating the need for an amplifier.

The Problem With Standard School PA Systems

Many schools have a PA system, but the speakers are often mounted in front and off to the side of the stage so that the singers and musicians plugged into it will not be able to hear themselves! In addition to this, almost all school performance spaces are missing “stage monitors.” These are the speakers that point at the performers.

There are a few solutions to this problem:

- 1 **Stage Monitors** (floor wedges, in-ear monitors, etc.). These are speakers that point the sound at the performers instead of at the audience. All serious live music venues have a few of these on stage so that everyone can hear themselves and each other. You can connect a stage monitor using your mixer’s line out, auxiliary, or monitor output jack and we offer one in our instrument menu. When drum sets and amplifiers are involved, this is the only way for singers or anyone going through the PA system to hear themselves and each other. Usually during “sound check” musicians can request how much of which instrument they want to hear in the monitor (example: “less bass,” “more vocals,” “no guitar”). Microphones are usually placed in front of guitar amplifiers or drums so that the sound can then be transmitted through the mixer and into the monitors for both the audience and/or musicians to hear. Professionals with a bigger budget or on a larger stage will often use wireless “in-ear” monitors so that they can move around more freely or adjust levels from their backpack.
- 2 **Guitar or Bass Amp.** Although not ideal for sound quality, you can use the line out, auxiliary out or monitor output jack from the mixer into the auxiliary input (1st choice) or instrument input of a guitar or bass amp and point it at your



singers. Turn the amp on after the connection is made.

- 3 Speaker Placement.** If you have a portable PA system such as the Fender Passport that we offer, you can set up the speakers behind and off to the sides of the singer so that he or she, and the musicians can hear themselves as clearly as the audience. If the microphone is pointed at the speaker it may begin to cause feedback. It is best to test the limits of the setup to see how far you can push it before this happens.
- 4 Ear Plugs.** If your singers are having trouble hearing themselves, wearing earplugs will allow them to hear the notes they are singing, as it resonates in their head. The downside of this is that they will have trouble properly hearing the rest of the band. They can also try wearing just one ear plug.

What To Do When the PA System

Is Not Loud Enough

First make sure that your singers are using the microphone properly (see below). If you've reached the maximum volume of your speakers or monitors and your singers and musicians are still having trouble hearing themselves and each other, the answer is very simple: PLAY SOFTER! It is essential to stress the importance of the singer being heard by his or herself, and also by each musician. After all, they are there to accompany and support the singer. The accompaniment should always be a notch or two lower in the mix than the vocals in order for lyrics and vocal timbre to be heard clearly. Plenty of time should be spent practicing how to play together, adjust dynamics, and "fit into the mix."

In the sections for all other instruments we address ways of controlling volume such as playing drums with "rod" sticks or brushes, putting a t-shirt over drumheads, and using the volume and tone knobs on guitars.

The Art of Using a Microphone

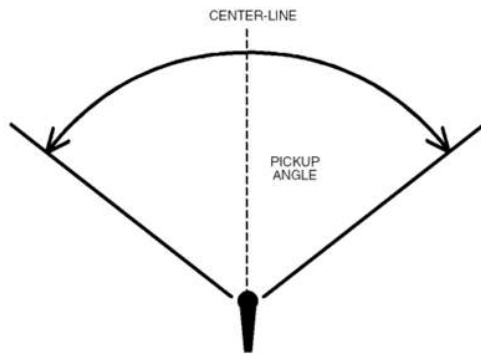
The microphone works for the singer, not the other way around. Impress upon your students that they should move the microphone and position it to where they feel comfortable. What your students have to express is valid and important. The microphone is their tool to let their expression be heard.

Here are some tips to help your students learn proper microphone technique:

- 1** The microphone should point towards your mouth (Many beginners will point it at the ceiling while singing straight ahead).
- 2** When singing at normal volume stay within an inch or two of the microphone. This will maximize the PA system without requiring more volume, which leads to the risk of feedback.
- 3** When singing louder notes, you can back off a few inches to keep volume consistent.
- 4** Bring the microphone up to you so that you can stand straight and look straight ahead. Do not lean down to the microphone.
- 5** Hold the mic firmly. Rubbing it with the hands will cause unwanted noise. Avoid touching where it connects to the XLR cable so that you do not risk disconnecting it.
- 6** Experiment with the pickup range. It is generally around 66



degrees on all sides of the center line, and the volume begins to become noticeably less around 33 degrees on all sides from the center line:



- 7 Explain to students that microphones are sensitive equipment. Teach them how to avoid accidents like stepping on cables and dropping microphones. Come up with safe and easy routines for how to care for take them out and put them away.
- 8 Teach children how to check if a microphone is on. Remind them that all they need to do is speak into the mic, not hit it or blow into it.

Stage Presence

In traditional vocal music programs, the more a singer can stand still and not draw attention to themselves, the better! This may indeed make perfect sense when trying to create a singular unified sound and visual effect, but it could not be any farther from the truth when it comes to a popular music ensemble! Many of us teachers might be working with students that already have this perception of how to sing, and on top of that are extremely self-conscious and shy! There is a lot of work to do to bring out their inner rock star! Here are some ideas:

1 Set an Example

If you are not having fun and strutting your stuff across the classroom floor, it will also be hard to get your students to. Try to break out of your own shell in service to your students! One of the true gifts of working with children is that it gives us an excuse to act like one! Practice your own imitation of Freddie Mercury, Beyonce, Jimi Hendrix or Kanye West. Share your progress with your students.

2 Lip Sync American Idol

Have your class act as a panel. Allow volunteers to lip sync a song of their choosing (that is pre-screened by you) and try their best to imitate the performer, or give it their own spin. Depending on your classroom environment, either you or your students can act as judge, but it is important that it is in the spirit of encouragement and not criticism.



3 Watch Videos of the Greats

Show students videos of great performances and not so great ones, too. Evaluate how each made them feel as a member of the audience, and how impactful the presence and charisma of the performer can be for the audience member.

4 Silent Performance

Whatever song you are working on, perform it silently. Have students pretend to sing and play their instruments. This will make them want to express the music physically since they have no other means of doing so. Rate their performance based on presence only!

5 Practice Specific Moves

Sometimes students only need a few concrete suggestions to get them started and then the spirit will take over! Just like dancing, we often get on the floor and do a simple two step and then before you know it, we are sliding across the floor! Come up with a simple repertoire of moves that your students can use to get started.

6 Enlist a Choreographer and Panel

Allow one member of your Modern Band, or a few, to be in charge of movement in your performance. It can be their job to help choreograph moves for the song and work with each band member individually. Have students who are not involved in a particular performance become involved by providing feedback about stage presence. Again, the success of this will be contingent on your classroom culture and the group dynamic.

7 Exaggerate

Sometimes a student might be afraid to use the space of a stage when singing lead and it is as if they are glued to the floor. Instead of encouraging them to "try to move around a little" have them sing the song while walking around the entire stage like they were someone who lost their keys and was running late! After that, incorporating just a few steps here and there will be a breeze. Do the same kinds of exaggerated movements with all aspects of stage presence!

The Power of Auditions (Use it Wisely)

Depending on your situation, auditions may be necessary. Many people point to a negative audition experience as the nail in the coffin of their musical dreams. We must be very careful to use auditions in a positive way. Here are some ways that they may be valuable for all.

- Auditions can be used as an assessment tool, not a means of exclusion. Auditions can save teachers time because they will aid in locating the singers in a large population that already have singing experience. In turn, these experienced students naturally become leaders, or "extra teachers" in the room. With more teachers, increased learning is inevitable.
- They can benefit students as much as their teachers. Students get to watch and listen to the footage of themselves as many times as they like.
- Considering the nervousness that auditions can trigger, it is

important that teachers emphasize that they are not mandatory, but just recommended. Teachers can allow students to come up with a partner to alleviate the pressure.

- Audition footage is a window into the classroom for family, friends and the school community in general. Outsiders who take the time to watch these videos will usually serve as vocal coaches to the students during after school hours.

Props and Tools for Teaching Vocals

Slide Whistle

You can warm up your students' voices by doing a few minutes of "repeat after me" using the slide whistle. You can use one hand to play it, and the other to show the melodic contour going up and down. Using a slide whistle to demonstrate melodic contour allows you to do so in a range that may be easy for a child but impossible for the teacher, especially for a male. It is also really fun and often funny to listen to and shows pitch contour as something continuous instead of separate points within a scale.



Melodica

A Melodica is a small handheld keyboard that you blow into, vibrating reeds like a harmonica. By holding it sideways and facing your students, it also allows them to visualize melodic contour, but as separate points within a scale. Its advantage over a keyboard or step bells is that it has a more vocal tone with a wide dynamic range and can sustain as long as you breath into it. It is usually within the higher octaves of a piano, good for matching kids voices.



Hand Puppets

Puppets can be magical for small children who perceive them to be as real as people! For older children, they may lighten the mood and grab their attention more than you can since they see you all the time! You can use different puppets to demonstrate different vocal tones. For instance, Princess Paula is a soprano opera singer and her husband Prince Peter is a bass. When a male teacher wants to demonstrate a falsetto tone without students thinking it weird, or jumping an octave above him, using a female puppet can work wonders!



Two Small Wood Shims and a String (puppet handle)

Singing is very hard to do if you are hunched over or have poor posture. It is also tiring. Tell your students to imagine a straight string going from the base of their spine up to the top of their head while they are singing. When students start to slouch instead of verbally directing them, you can get out your pretend puppet handle made of two small pieces of wood in a "X" and pretend to pull them up straight. You can also use this prop in the beginning to provide the visualization, and then

just make a motion with your hand using an imaginary one.

Toy or Real Microphones

As Modern Band teachers we want to prepare our students for singing into microphones. You can use a toy one or a broken one as a prop that you pass around the room, or you can use a real amplified microphone to give the actual experience!

Backing Tracks

Using drum tracks or backing tracks can make a mundane activity more relevant or exciting for your students. In order to hear the singing clearly, you can stick with just drum tracks, or keep the volume low if there is harmony. In our technology section we provide many ways of easily finding or making backing tracks for use in your classroom.



Visit the technology section for more info.

Warm Ups for Singing

Body Stretching

Having singers stretch can quickly relax their body and get them focused. Everyone can agree that there are many ways to stretch the human body. With limited time in the classroom, neck rolls and shoulder raises are two quick ways to combat upper body tension. If you have more time, you can add as much to this as you'd like. Playing music during a stretch routine can make it more pleasurable. You can also add light dance inspired calisthenics to get the blood flowing!

Face Stretching

Making animal faces (beaver, fish and roaring lion) is a fun way to relax the jaw, mouth and tongue. If animal faces don't go over well with older students you can say "show me your teeth" instead of the beaver, "pucker up" instead of the fish, or "look shocked" instead of the lion. Having students roll their lips and make "propeller" sounds is a great way to loosen the lips. You can also try having students pretend to be eating food or chewing gum in a really exaggerated way.

Stretch and Yawn

Objective: To stretch the upper body, loosen up the vocal chords and create a kinesthetic awareness of melodic contour.

Procedures:

- 1 Have students stand in a circle.
- 2 Say, "Let's stretch UP first and have a big yawn!" Model stretching your arms to the ceiling as you begin an exaggerated yawn on a very high pitch in your head voice.
- 3 Slowly bring your arms down lowering the pitch of your yawn to the bottom of your chest voice, then rotate your shoulders, and wiggle your arms. You can also pretend

like you're scratching your back against a pole behind you, loosening up the torso.

- 4 Repeat the process, and try to be as animated as possible. Students of all ages will have fun with this!
- 5 Model planting feet firmly to the floor as you shake your knees and legs, vibrating your vocal chords, and doing an exaggerated vocal vibrato on a low tone.
- 6 Bring it back up to the upper body and swing your arms from behind your back to straight up in the air, following the arc with your voice.
- 7 Stop at the top and say, "Let's see who can hold out a yawn the longest! Drop your arms only when you stop!" (Adapted from Find Your Voice: a partnership between Musical Futures and The Sage Gateshead UK)

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.

Shake, Shakity, Shake

Objective: To loosen the body and vocal chords and create a kinesthetic awareness of melodic contour.

Procedures:

- 1 Form a circle.
- 2 Demonstrate the following chant and motions very slowly.

Up Shake, shake, shake, shakity shake



(Reach hands in the air, lean up, and shake loosely – either do a non-pitched chant, or go higher in pitch)

And a down shake, shake, shake, shakity, shake



(Reach hands down toward the floor and shake loosely, either do a non-pitched chant or go lower in pitch. Perform these two measures twice before moving on.)

To the front, to the back, to the side side side



(Shake hands in front, shake hands in back, then shimmy to the right. The second time shimmy to the left. Chant "to the" on a lower pitch and "back, front, side side side" on a higher

pitch. Perform this measure twice).

And around, and around



(Students can choose how they represent going around, either by spinning, twirling their hands, etc. Either chant or go up and down with pitch)

- 3 Have students join in with you going slowly.
- 4 Repeat it faster and faster until they're going as fast as they can.

Note: If older students do not find this one appealing on its own, you can add a backing track or tempo adjustable drum track in the style that appeals to them – Hip-Hop, Rock, R&B, etc. (See our technology section for tips on finding/creating backing tracks)

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.

(Adapted from Find Your Voice: a partnership between Musical Futures and The Sage Gateshead UK)

Vocal Exploration Activities:

Hide and Seek Game Using Pitch or Using Dynamics

Objective: Students will learn how high and low their voices can go, switching between their head and chest voices. With Dynamics, they will learn how loud or soft their voices can go while still retaining a pitch.

Resources: A small object to hide

Vocabulary: High, Low, Soft, Loud, Dynamics, Pitch

Procedures:

- 1 Explain directions: For pitch, students guide a classmate towards a hidden object by getting higher in pitch as he or she gets closer to the object and lower in pitch as he or she gets farther from the object. You can give the students a neutral syllable to sing, or allow them to use any syllables of their choosing. For dynamics, students sing softer on a melodic fragment of a song of your choosing, when a classmate is far away and get louder as they approach the object.
- 2 Demonstrate the process by placing the object somewhere and then walking close or far away from it, demonstrating what the class should do with their voices to help you find it.
- 3 Try it again, but this time don't join in, and see if the students can successfully guide you on their own, going closer and then farther away to test their understanding.
- 4 Choose a student to hide an object, and a student to search for it. The student searching can look away into a corner of the room, or sit on a chair facing the door, etc.

- 5 Tell students that you will be choosing those who are participating and trying their best to be the next hider or seeker.

Extensions: This activity can also be done using instruments, body percussion, and vocal percussion.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.

Follow the Sound Partner Game

Objective: Students will create unique vocal sounds, explore the possibilities of the voice and expand their comfort zone. Students will also actively listen to differentiate between vocal sounds and timbres. Students will develop trust and camaraderie within your class.

Resources: Optional Chairs

Procedures:

- 1 In pairs, students will come up with a distinct vocal sound. You can also direct them to pick an instrument sound or a percussion sound.
- 2 One student leads the other around the room using that sound while the other has his or her eyes closed. At any given time there could be 10-15 different sounds filling up the room at once.
- 3 Stop after a minute or two and have partners switch roles or find new partners.

Variations: If this activity presents a danger in your teaching space due to room setup, space restrictions, or your student population, you can have a row of chairs for the students with their eyes closed to sit in, while their partners making vocal sounds walk around the chairs. When the students with their eyes closed hear their partner, they reach out and stop them and the student making sounds sits in front of the chair until everyone has found their partner.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context. Anchor Standard #9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work. Example: MU:Re9.1.5a – Evaluate musical works and performances, applying established criteria, and explain appropriateness to the context, citing evidence from the elements of music.

(Adapted from Find Your Voice: a partnership between Musical Futures and The Sage Gateshead UK)

Follow Your Partner’s Voice

This activity is much like the previous activity, “Follow the Sound” but partners all sing the same song or melodic fragment of a song while students with their eyes closed must differentiate between the unique timbres of each voice.

Extension: Have students that succeeded in following their partner describe the characteristics of their partners voice using their musical vocabulary.

National Core Arts Standards: Anchor Standard #9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work. Example: MU:Re9.1.5a – Evaluate musical works and performances, applying established criteria, and explain appropriateness to the context, citing evidence from the elements of music. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.

Singing Yo-Yos

If you can get a Yo-Yo and learn a few tricks such as “Stalling,” “Walk the Dog” and “Around the World,” great. If not, you can either show a video, or just use an imaginary Yo-Yo! Demonstrate how when the Yo-Yo goes down the voice goes down, and when it comes up, the voice comes up. Have students follow the Yo-Yo, real or imagined, with their voice.

Extension: Allow students to work individually with their own Yo-Yos, representing the movements it makes with their voices.

National Core Arts Standards: Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.

Singing Air Guitars

Objective: Students will lose singing inhibitions, warm up their voices, and have fun, by imitating guitar tones while playing air guitars!

Resources: A real guitar if possible, but teacher can also use an air guitar

Procedures:

- 1 Tell students to take out their air guitars, put them on and get them in tune.
- 2 Tell them they are going to repeat after you using their air guitars (you don't even have to mention the voice as they will automatically use their voice to make the sounds of the air guitar).
- 3 Start simple and play some short licks on the guitar, singing them at the same time (try to keep them all the same length – 4 beats long is perfect).
- 4 If you do not play guitar well enough to do this, you can also play air guitar, or hold a real guitar and pretend to play licks, using your voice only to make the sound.
- 5 When done, tell students to put them back in their imaginary cases, or on an imaginary stand.

Extension: Allow a student to come up and lead the class.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #1: Generate and

conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.

Sirens

Objective: Students will explore melodic contour and the transition point between head and chest voice.

Procedures:

- 1 Demonstrate two or three unique siren sounds using your head voice, or going in and out of your head and chest voice. One can be for a fire engine with a long and slow arc and an occasional honk, and one for a police car that has a fast oscillation. Have students imitate both sounds.
- 2 When you are sure that they know the difference, tell them they need to be either a police car or a fire engine depending on the emergency.
- 3 Tell them some emergencies, such as, "Oh no, there is a cat stuck in the tree!" They should then make a fire engine noise. You might also say, "Oh no, there's a burglar hiding behind the drum set!" In this case, they should then make a police car noise.



National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.

Common Core State Standards: Example: ELA/Reading - Key Ideas and Details. RI.4.2: Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

Follow the Ball

Objective: Students will explore melodic contour and the transition point between head and chest voice. They will also practice making a kick drum sound.

Resources: A safe and lightweight ball

Procedures:

- 1 Find a safe and lightweight ball that you can easily catch, and can be easily seen.
- 2 When the ball is in the air, students follow it with their voice, ascending in pitch when the ball is going up, and descending in pitch when the ball is going down.
- 3 When the ball is caught or hits the floor, students should make a low boom sound or a kick drum sound with their voice.
- 4 Split the room into two groups: those that do the boom sound when it is caught or hits the ground, and those that follow the ball in the air with their voice. After a couple of minutes have them switch roles.
- 5 You can alternate between throwing the ball high in the air with pauses between each throw, and more of a constant smaller throw where you keep a tempo, catching it on the beat.



Extension: Invite a student to play catch with you or with another student, or have a student to come up and lead the group by him or herself. Use multiple balls. Have students imitate the timbre of specific instruments.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context.

Rollercoasters

Objective: Using iconographic notation students will compose and perform melodic contours.

Resources: Whiteboard, giant pad or chalkboard, markers, chalk

Procedures:

- 1 Draw a rollercoaster track on your whiteboard. After counting yourself off, “one, two, ready, go, etc.” follow it slowly with a pointer, ruler or drumstick, while ascending with your voice as it goes up, and descending as it goes down. Invite the class to join in with you.
- 2 Have a volunteer student come up and draw his or her own rollercoaster track. Have them conduct the class, counting them off and following it with the pointer at their own chosen speed.
- 3 Choose another volunteer and repeat the process.

Extension: Students can also do this in small groups, and rehearse their rollercoaster so that all group members are more-or-less making the same vocalization, and then the groups can take turns performing their rollercoaster.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #3: Present – Share creative musical work that conveys intent, demonstrates craftsmanship, and exhibits originality.

Bubblegum Person

Objective: Students will use their bodies and storytelling to express and explore melodic contour and vocal sounds.

Procedure:

- 1 This vocal exploration story game gives your students a chance to get creative! First you will tell and demonstrate the basic story of bubblegum person using both words and vocal sounds. Here is the story:
 - a) You'll say, “One day I made a person out of bubblegum.”
Take imaginary bubblegum out of your mouth and shape it into a person.
 - b) “Then bubblegum person went for a walk.” In a high voice that goes from high to low and back again, say, “do-ta, do-ta, do-ta, do-ta, do-ta, do” as you use your first and second fingers on one hand to walk on the palm of your other hand.
 - c) “He then walked into a skyscraper and pressed the button

- for the elevator." Now say, "DING!" in a high head voice.
- d) "He went all the way up to the top." Start at the bottom of your range and slowly go to the top of your head voice on the syllable "ooh" while your hand (bubblegum person) goes from waist high to above your head.
 - e) "He gets to the top," and then say "DING!" again in a high head voice.
 - f) "Then he puts on a parachute." Come up with a few fun or unique vocal sounds and hand motions perhaps for the zipper, the strapping in, or putting on hooks, such as "Zip, Zip, clunk!"
 - g) "Then he jumps out the window!" Now follow your hand from high above your head down to your waist as you say "Weeeeeee," descending from the top of your head voice range to low into your chest voice range.
 - h) "And when he gets to the bottom he goes, Splat!" Clap as you say splat!
- 2 After you go through the story, invite students to join in and narrate it one more time.
 - 3 Now tell the story only with vocal sounds and without any narration!

Creative Extension:

Now ask for volunteers to add another step to the story, and an accompanying vocal sound, or to change parts of the story. The story will begin to evolve, challenging the memory and inspiring an exploration of new vocal sounds! Students can also work in small groups to create their own stories and then share out with the class.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #3: Present – Share creative musical work that conveys intent, demonstrates craftsmanship, and exhibits originality.

Lower the Recording, Raise the Voice

Objective: Students will learn to sing a song by performing it several times with a recording that gradually reduces in volume.

Resources: Song recording, accompaniment instrument, song lyrics

Procedures:

- 1 Distribute lyric sheets or project lyrics for the class to see.
- 2 When the ball is in the air, students follow it with their voice, ascending in pitch when the ball is going up, and descending in pitch when the ball is going down.
- 3 Repeat step 2 several times. Each time, gradually reduce the volume of the recording so that more of the singing responsibility is on the class. Teacher will check to see how well the class is keeping pitch and tempo by occasionally raising the level of the recording.
- 4 Conclude the class with a final run-through of the song with no aid from the recording. Teacher will provide accompaniment

and lead the song.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.

All Words to One Word

Objective: Students will sing a part of a song they know well and remove one word at a time until there is only one left, developing their ability to hear internally (audiate).

Procedures:

- 1 Have lyrics to the song section you are using on the board or a screen where you will be able to cross out words one at a time. You should use just part of a song so that this activity can be completed with 5-10 minutes.
- 2 Sing the song section with your class while you or a student keeps the beat with a metronome, drum track, or percussion instrument.
- 3 Without skipping a beat, cross out the first word and sing it again, hearing the crossed out word in your head, and coming in on the next word.
- 4 Cross out the first two words and sing it again.
- 5 Repeat until there is only one word left (the last word of the phrase)! Then for the final round sing all the words!

Extensions:

Try removing the last word of the phrase one by one, instead of the first.

Use a larger section, or an entire song, and remove entire sentences, one by one.

You could also do this with instruments using a chord progression or a riff, removing one chord at a time, or one note at a time.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #4: Analyze the structure and context of varied musical works and their implications for performance. Example: MU:Pr4.2.5a – Demonstrate understanding of the structure and the elements of music (such as rhythm, pitch, form, and harmony) in a music selected for performance.

Building a Vocal Groove

Objective: Students will replicate teacher created vocal ostinatos (small repeating musical patterns) by rote, and be able to maintain their own part while others are going on simultaneously. This will help them develop part independence as both a musician and singer.

Procedures:

- 1 For both the teacher and students, this activity can start extremely simple and be developed over the course of a whole year. You can begin with very simple four beat rhythms such as: and aim for only two simultaneous parts. In the beginning you can perform them with no pitch and just use percussive vocal sounds such as “Ka” or “boom”, emulating a hi-hat, snare drum or kick drum.
- 2 Begin by bringing students into a circle. Stand in the middle and have students all keep a beat at a moderate tempo by patting or snapping.
- 3 Using your voice, create simple non-pitched 4 beat rhythms for students to echo. Use sounds that a drum set might make. Over the beat, you say a pattern such as “Boom Ka, Boom-

Boom, Ka,” and the students say it back to you.

- 4 After a minute or so, settle on a single phrase that students can repeat over and over as an ongoing ostinato (short repeating musical pattern).
- 5 Once the whole class can maintain this pattern without your help, signal a line that splits the circle into two halves and do another “repeat after me” giving half the group a second pattern. You may want to emulate a hi-hat (ts-ts-ts-ts-ts-ts-ts-ts).
- 6 If this is easy for your students, you may add a third or fourth part.
- 7 If it starts to fall apart, bring it back to a single part, and rebuild it.
- 8 If it comes together quickly, go back to the first group and start over with a new pattern.
- 9 Try having groups switch parts.

More Advanced Extensions: Add in pitched content such as bass lines or root notes of a chord progression. After this process becomes very comfortable for you and your students, you can do overlapping melodic ostinatos with lyrical content! Students may also be invited to lead this activity or break off into groups and compose their own vocal grooves.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr2.1.5a – Demonstrate selected and developed musical ideas for improvisations, arrangements or compositions to express intent and explain connection to purpose and context.

Jamming on One Note then More Notes

Objective: Students will be able to repeat and create one or two note vocal melodies while singing on pitch.

Resources: A stylistically relevant backing track or live accompaniment in a key best suited for you and your students. You can also combine live guitar or keyboard with a drum track. For the procedures below we suggest the key of G and a neutral progression such as the I chord (G) and the IV chord (C). (G for 2 beats to C for 2 beats).

Procedures:

- 1 Have the backing track or live playing going as the students enter the room.
- 2 Sing a G note on a neutral syllable (La, or lu, or ba, etc.) and hold it out, as you make eye contact with all of your students.
- 3 Signal for them to join in with you.
- 4 Once you are sure that they've got this note in their head, start inventing easy rhythms as simple as on one neutral syllable that are only 4 beats long, and signal for them to echo you.
- 5 Start simple and get more complicated with the rhythm.

- 6 Start adding different vowel sounds and scat syllables, being sure to not use actual words so that the focus is on the sound and tone.
- 7 Now that they've got the anchor pitch, add other pitches to the mix.
- 8 Experiment with different tones and volume levels. Get creative but be sure to stick on a single pitch!

Extension: Allow a volunteer student to be the leader.

Have students take turns inventing their own one note (or more) 4 beat melody, going around the room, 1 student per measure. Be sure to give them the option to pass. You could have students that don't want to go keep their hands down and those that want to go, raise their hands.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges.

Jamming In 1 Key

Objective: Students will actively listen to and echo various vocal phrases by rote.

Resources: A backing track in a key of your choosing or self-accompaniment. You can also try using chord progressions to songs you are working on, or karaoke tracks to songs you are working on.

Procedures:

- 1 Play the track.
- 2 Starting simple, sing anything you like for students to repeat back to you in small 1 or 2 measure phrases. Be sure to keep them the same length so that it is clear when students should repeat you.
- 1 Experiment with dynamics and tone.
- 1 If you think they are ready, allow student volunteers to lead.

Extensions: If you played in a major key, change the track to the same tonic, but now a minor key (Ex: A major and then A minor). Have students note the difference.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context.

Pitched Conversation

Objective: Students will improvise a melody using words and pitches, improving their ability to match pitch.

Resources: Optional stylistically relevant backing track or live accompaniment in a key best suited for you and your students. You can also combine live guitar or keyboard with a drum track. For the procedures below, we suggest the key of G and a progression of only the root chord (G) and the IV chord (C). (G for 2 beats to C for 2 beats).

Procedures:

- 1 Using one note only, sing to your students, “For the next few minutes everything you or I say, has to be said on this note! Our voices are stuck on this note! Can you say, ‘OK’, on this note please?” (Note: Feel free to add other pitches at the onset or as the activity develops)
- 2 You can begin telling a story using that pitch, trying to also stay in rhythm if using a backing track.
- 3 Begin to ask questions or leave the end of your sentences blank and choose a volunteer to answer them such as “If I could travel to one place in the world it would be...” and with younger kids “What color is Susan’s shirt?” or “2 plus 2 equals...”
- 4 After getting students comfortable with answering with single words, you can give them a chance to improvise by answering you in full sentences or telling you a story about something!

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context.

If You Can Say it, You Can Rap It

Objective: Students will respond to questions by rapping their answers.

Resources: Hip-Hop backing track, or a drum track

Procedures:

- 1 Have drum track playing as students enter the room.
- 2 Everything you say to the students must be “rapped”. This means you are giving your words a musical rhythm that is in sync with the backing track. You should try to fit words into groupings of 4 or 8 beats so that your lines have “meter.” Sometimes this will mean stretching words out or big long pauses. That is ok! Eventually this will become intuitive for you and your students. Feel free to practice this in the car on the way to work, walking to school from the subway, or on the phone with loved ones!
- 3 Rap to them something like, “For the next ten minutes everything we say must be rapped, but do not worry, it doesn’t have to rhyme, the only thing to think about is rhythm and time. That just rhymed because I got lucky. If you can answer my question with a rap in a complete sentence, raise your hand.”
- 4 Start out very easy with questions like, “What is your name?” Students should answer in a complete rapped sentence: “My name is Susan.” If they do not rap it, thank them for trying and ask if they would like to try again this time rapping it.
- 5 Move on to more open-ended questions such as, “What are you going to do this weekend?” or, “What has been the best part of your week?” These will require more creative rapping!

Extensions:

Allow students to have “rap conversations” with each other in

small groups while a backing track plays in the background.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context.

Common Core State Standards: ELA Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration. Example: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.1.B: Follow agreed-upon rules for discussions and carry out assigned roles.

Scattin' a Rap

Objective: Students will be able to echo and create 4 beat scatted rap phrases.

Resources: Hip-Hop Backing Track

Procedures:

- 1 Having fun, embracing absurdity, and going for it with no inhibitions is key to getting your students to follow.
- 2 Play backing track and initiate a “repeat after me.”
- 3 Create a 4 beat scatted rap phrase, (Ex: “Booka baki doopa sabbady doo”) and have students repeat you. While doing so, show the 4 count with your fingers so they understand the length of your phrases.
- 4 Once they are comfortable, allow volunteer students to lead the exercise.
- 5 Go around the room allowing each student to create a 1 bar scat rap. Students who do not want to participate can put a thumbs down so that you can skip them without a pause.
- 6 Repeat doing 2 bar phrases (8 beats). This will require deeper listening and be a bigger creative challenge!

Extension: Allow students to compose an entire rap using only scat syllables. Allow students to have scat rap conversations in small groups.

National Core Arts Standards (Music): Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Example: MU:Cr1.1.5 - Improvise rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic ideas, and explain the connection to specific purpose and context.

Activities for Already Comfortable Singers

All teachers know that establishing good routines is a common attribute of teachers who have successful classrooms. Vocal music teachers are not excluded. While routines in the music classroom can take on many forms, one thing remains constant: they help singers relax, focus, and feel confident before rehearsals and performances. In addition to the body and face stretching in the beginning section, the following are some warm-up routines to use with your more established vocal students:

Posture Check

Having students stand with their back against a wall is a fast and simple way to remind them of good singing posture. Four parts of the body (All b's) should touch the wall, including the back of the heel, butt, shoulder blades and back of the head. Once students step off the wall, they should maintain their straight posture, keeping their feet shoulder width apart with a slight bend in the knees. Singers that are seated should be reminded to sit on the edge of their chair, feet flat on the floor, standing from the waste. A fun exercise that you can do to demonstrate the value of good posture is to have your students sing a pitch on "ahh" with their head straight. Then have them sing the same pitch while lowering and raising their head. Ask students what happened to the pitch. Another Little Kids Rock teachers swears by the phrase, "Show me an attitude," as confidence will naturally improve posture and strength of the body.

Breathing

One analogy that helps beginning singers to better understand the process of breathing is the image of waves breaking on a shoreline. After waves crash on the shore, they retreat back into the sea. Singers can use this analogy as a reminder to use up their entire breath before inhaling again. Fully grasping the process of singing involves a deeper understanding of breath support. Here are a few warm-up activities related to breathing:

Rhythmic Breathing

This is a simple warm-up intended to get students to start thinking about and feeling phrases through their breathing. Basically, this warm-up involves asking students to inhale and exhale for predetermined amounts of time. A good starting point is inhaling four beats and exhaling for eight. Using background music that students know and love is a great way to help students count the beats while they are breathing and keep it fun and relevant.

Alphabet Breath Song

This is a fun way to show students the power in taking a good breath. Students are invited to inhale fully and then sing the alphabet song as many times as possible on one breath. The game ends when the last person is out of air and stops singing.

Because I'm Happy, Happy, Happy, Happy

This fun activity is meant to show students how excessive breathiness can undermine the ability to finish a phrase, and should be used with care! The object is to exaggerate the "HAAApy" and see how many times you can say the words before running out of breath. Being most kids love this classic song by Pharell, this is a fun one for all.

The Tongue

The tongue is one muscle that can easily be overlooked when teaching students about singing. Young singers usually don't spend enough time focusing on the tongue to understand that it can

interfere with producing sound. By creating an awareness of its power, students' will immediately begin to enlist its help in their singing endeavours!

Three Tongue Positions Warm Up

One exercise that will immediately illustrate this point involves a demonstration of three tongue positions in the mouth.

- ① Explain and demonstrate the three positions of the tongue:
 - a) First, we can press the tongue straight down so that it's pushing against the gums below our bottom teeth.
 - b) Second, we can let the tip of our tongue rest naturally against our bottom teeth.
 - c) Lastly, we can curl the tip of the tongue up so that it presses against the hard palate.
- ② Have students repeat these three movements with their tongue while singing the same pitch.
- ③ Ask them to describe what they felt and heard. Everyone knows that muscles need to be warmed up before they get used.

Tongue Twisters

Seeing the tongue is the muscle, we should also give it time to warm up. Tongue twisters are a great way to get the tongue moving without bringing too much attention to it. They are also a fun way to stimulate the students' minds while getting them to focus on diction. Try to rapidly repeat the following phrases with your students. Be warned, they will eventually want to generate some of their own ideas.

- "Unique New York"
- "Red Leather Yellow Leather,"
- "Sally Sells Seashells by the Seashore"
- "Rubber Baby Buggy Bumpers."

Ear Training

Many music teachers often forget how connected ear-training is to the process of learning how to sing. Helping students develop their "ear" is a skill that will aid their musical journey, regardless of the path they choose. Here are a few examples of vocal warm-ups that focus on becoming aware of the diatonic scale, interval relationships and melodic patterns. For all of these examples you can experiment with using a drum track to bring more excitement or change things up!

Who Let the Bees Out

This is a catchy vocalise geared towards getting shy singers to produce their first sounds. First, the teacher hums an ascending scale up to the fifth step (tell the students it feels like a hive of bees swarming inside your mouth). The second time, invite them to try it with you. Next, demonstrate the addition of the descending notes on an open "ah" (letting the imaginary bees fly out). The fact that the mouth begins in a closed position gets students to focus on breathing and supporting a loud hum. When their mouths eventually open, they are typically surprised by how much sound they can produce. Continue the pattern, moving up or down chromatically by half steps or remain in the same key and experiment with changing syllables.

Mm Mm Mm Mm Ah Ah Ah Ah Ah

Ascending Thirds

This is a bona fide vocalise that works great for introducing leaps. It can be sung on any vowel sound of your choice. It works well as a precursor to harmonizing since a third above is the most common harmonizing note, and students will get used to finding it!

The “Number Song”

This is a great warm up to use for many reasons. First, numbers are something that even non-singers can understand. Second, the song connects numbers and major scale tonality in a straightforward manner. As numbers go up, so does pitch. When numbers go down, again the pitch follows. Third, the number song is good for singers of all levels because it requires concentration to perform. Regardless of vocal ability, all participants must focus and work together to complete the numerical pattern. Finally, it should be noted that many other concepts can be linked to this warm up, including harmony, scales and improvisation.

1 1 2 1 1 2 3 2 1 1 2 3 4 3 2 1 1 2 3 4 5 4 3 2 1 1 2 3 4 5 6 5 4 3 2

6 1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 8 7 8 8 7 6 7 8 8 7 6 5 6 7

12 8 8 7 6 5 4 5 6 7 8 8 7 6 5 4 3 4 5 6 7 8 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 8 7

17 6 5 4 3 2 1

The “Interval Song”

This tried and true standard also uses numbers to denote the pitches of the major scale. Unlike the “Number Song,” this warm-up focuses on the intervals of the scale as opposed to the individual steps.



VOCAL LESSON PLANS

LESSON PLAN: Beginner Beat Boxing

Objective:

Students will understand that any and every vocal sound can be used percussively. Students will learn the basic building blocks of beat boxing.

Resources:

Optional YouTube video

Procedures:

- 1 Here is a great script to introduce the voice as percussion instrument:
 - a) “Everyone make a sound with your mouth.” Some students will jump on the opportunity while other will want more direction.
 - b) “Even the word ‘make’ can act as a great vocal sound.” At this point, begin making rhythms using the word ‘make’.
 - c) “Ok, now let’s hum! Did you ever eat something and think it’s delicious? Pretend you just ate your favorite food.” Lead the class in an “mmmmmm.”
- 2 Ask students why it does not sound like beat boxing. The reason is that it does not emulate drum sounds.
- 3 Now show students how just these two sounds can be enough to create a cool rhythmic pattern! “Make, MakeMmm Make, Make, MakeMmmm.” Do a ‘repeat after me’ having them echo a few sample patterns using ‘make’ and ‘mmmm’.
- 4 Explain, “To make the sound of a kick drum or floor tom, close your lips and build up some air pressure. Then release. Try with tight lips, try with loose lips, try opening your mouth on the left, and then on the right. Try in the center. How does the sound differ?”
- 5 Explain, “To get the sound of a snare or a symbol, push air through your teeth with your lips open and your jaw relaxed. Try moving your tongue around – against your top palette, lower palette, in the back of your mouth, etc.” Give students time to experiment
- 6 Explain, “Move your tongue around, Move your lips around. Hear the different timbres.” Continue, “To get the sound of a hi hat, push your tongue against your top teeth, use it to block the air and then release the air.” Give students a minute or so to experiment.
- 7 Initiate another call and response.

Extension:

- 1 Send students in small groups to compose their own rhythms using various beat box sounds. Parameters may vary depending on age group and allotted time.
- 2 Show a YouTube video so great beat boxers. There are so many!

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #3: Present – Share creative musical work that conveys intent, demonstrates craftsmanship, and exhibits originality.



LESSON PLAN: Hearing Notes in the Major Scale

Objective:

Students will be able to tell which note they are hearing from a Major scale through an exercise that guides the way they pay attention to it.

Resources:

Any pitched instrument like a piano or guitar

Procedures:

- 1 Play a one octave, ascending Major scale for your class. It doesn't matter which key you choose; some teachers may want a key that fits the vocal range of their students, while others may want one that the students can play on their instruments. For the sake of this example we'll use the key of C Major.
- 2 Ask the students to sing the scale in an ascending direction only. Use numbers to represent the pitches they hear while singing at a comfortably slow tempo "one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, one".
- 3 Tell students that you are going to play a pattern of notes from the Major scale and that you'd like everyone to say the sequence of numbers as a group. Be mindful at first to always begin on the lowest note of the scale (1) and only use ascending or repeated notes without any skips. For example you may play C D E E E and then as a group everyone will say "1-2-3-3-3." Then try another pattern C D D E F and everyone will repeat back "1-2-2-3-4."
- 4 After it is obvious to you that everyone has no trouble hearing ascending and repeated notes, incorporate a few descending examples.
- 5 Ask students to again sing the ascending scale with you. Now play just one of the notes and ask everyone to answer together which number they all heard (this way no-one gets singled out for answering incorrectly while everyone benefits from participating in the exercise). After everyone announces answers, play the scale up to the individual note you just played. Paying attention to music this way builds a foundation in musical perception for students that allows them to perceive notes in relationship to the "tonic" or starting note of any scale. As their skills improve you can mix in singing patterns that involve skips or descending patterns. Soon you'll be able to play a new song for your class and they'll be able to tell you which note of the scale the singer begins on!

Extension:

To expand on the ever-important skill of ear training, invite students to intentionally remove one note from the scale they are singing. For instance, when they arrive at the predetermined pitch, they may hear it in their mind and account for it rhythmically, but they are not allowed to not externalize the number or the pitch. Another extension activity is to repeat steps 1-5 on the minor or pentatonic scale.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Responding - Anchor Standard #7



LESSON PLAN: Re-Create A Song Using Only Vocals

Objective:

Students will be able to use their voices to approximate pitches, rhythms, and sounds contained within a song of their choice..

Resources:

Internet and visual source
Devices or computers with students chosen song
Headphones and headphone splitters
Paper and pencil
Projector

Procedures:

- 1 Play a video or song for the class which highlights the human voice in different capacities. Examples include a Bobby McFerrin performance, a beatboxer, a clip from the television show "The Sing Off," etc.
- 2 Explain to students that they are going to work in small groups and use their voices to imitate the sounds they hear in a recording of their choice.
- 3 Provide the class with several examples of how to recreate the sounds in a recording, demonstrating one instrument at a time.
 - a) Play the recording and start by recreating the beat.
 - b) Then, search for a bass line.
 - c) Next, look for catchy riffs or ostinatos.
 - d) Save the melody for last.
- 4 Allow students to divide into small groups to listen to their song (headphones and headphone splitters are a great way to convert a small classroom space into separate listening areas. Try to keep stronger singers in separate groups to ensure there will be a lead voice in each group)
- 5 Circulate the room to ensure students are listening to the recording and searching for parts.
- 6 Invite students to record their ideas so they do not forget them as they are layering.
- 7 Invite students to perform their finished product.

Extension:

More advanced students can try to translate figure out the key, chords or riffs of the song by ear using keyboards, guitars, JamCards, etc.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #3: Refine and complete artist work. Anchor Standards #4: Analyze, interpret and select artistic work for presentation. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation.



LESSON PLAN: Vocal Warm Ups From Our Favorite Songs

Objective:

Students will be able to use actual phrases, licks, and intervals that come from the music they love most as a vocal warm up to challenge and expand their range. This will help illuminate things they hear in the music they love.

Resources:

Recordings of the songs your class is working on.

Procedures:

- 1 Listen in advance to a recording of a song you are working on with your class. Find an element of that song, a phrase or a couple of notes that happen over and over that you can use to make a vocal warm up.
- 2 Play the recording for your class and point out the moment you have chosen to use as a vocal warm up. For this example we'll use "Diamonds" by Rihanna. She sings: "Shine bright like a diamond" up and down the interval of a 5th at a pretty rapid tempo, not an easy thing for a singer to do. Even though it's not the easiest vocal trick to do, students will have no problem because they already know how it sounds, coming from a song many are already familiar with.
- 3 Take this "vocal lick" and move it up chromatically using a guitar or a keyboard. Repeat moving up the scale until the vocal range of your students has been sufficiently challenged. You could also decide to move the vocal lick you choose down chromatically helping students become aware of using their lower registers.
- 4 Encourage your students to find vocal warm ups in the songs they like or other songs you're working on. Incorporate these ideas into your classes when you can. Honoring students this way increases buy in, validates their musical identity and gives them confidence!

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard #4: Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation. Anchor Standard #7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. Anchor Standard #9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.



LESSON PLAN: Using Jam Cards to Harmonize

Objective:

Students will use Jam Cards to learn sing the different notes of a chord.

Resources:

Little Kids Rock Jam Cards and keyboards.

Procedures:

- 1 Review the definition of a chord, reminding students that every chord is made of three unique notes.
- 2 Divide students into groups of three, providing each group with a keyboard or a xylophone.
- 3 Have groups practice naming the notes of different chords. For example, the teacher will say G Major and the groups will use their Jam Card to find the three notes in that chord. Repeat the process with several chords.
- 4 Next, each student will decide which of the three notes of the chord they would like to try to sing. Allow students time to see if they can each sing their note using the same neutral syllable like “la.”
- 5 Finally, each group will be invited to perform their three-part harmony for the class or explain to the class what was challenging about trying to sing different notes simultaneously.
- 6 If possible, record the performance and play it back so they can evaluate themselves.

Extension:

Students can create a rhythmic pattern to use when performing their harmony. Students can also do this alternating between two chords and then record themselves and use it as a backing track!

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard #2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation.

Anchor Standard #9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.



LESSON PLAN: Stairway to Singing

Objective:

Students will use a staircase for singing steps and leaps, harmonizing and vocal improvisation.

Resources:

A staircase and any pitched instrument

Procedures:

- 1 Teacher will play an ascending major scale on a pitched instrument and practice singing the pitches with the class, using numbers.
- 2 Depending on the amount of steps available, teachers will then sing notes as they ascend the staircase, with each step representing a step in the scale. Then they will descend the staircase and sing the same pitches in the opposite order.
- 3 In groups of 2-3, students will then try to ascend and descend the staircase while the teacher sings along or accompanies on an instrument.
- 4 Next the teacher will demonstrate leaps. For instance, the teacher can sing and step 1-3-5-3-1. Students will repeat while the teacher sings along or accompanies the leaps on an instrument.
- 5 Finally, the teacher will improvise a melody on the steps. For example, they will sing and step 1-2-3-2-3-4-3-4-5-4-3-2-1. Students will go next, improvising any combination of ascending and descending notes. For this task, having an accompaniment instrument is important so that the teacher can provide the student who is improvising with the correct pitches. Partners can observe, noting which pitches the student sang correctly.

Extension:

Many additional topics can be explored on the singing staircase, including harmonizing, pentatonic scale and major vs. minor scales.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.



LESSON PLAN: Forbidden Rhythms & Pitches

Objective:

Students will rely on musical memory (audiation) and build ear-training skills through a series of rhythmic and melodic call-and-response examples.

Resources:

Pitched instrument and/or voice, drum

Procedures:

Forbidden Rhythm:

- 1 Explain the rules
 - a) The teacher will perform a forbidden rhythm. If you hear this rhythm you must be silent and freeze like a statue. If you hear any other rhythm you must clap it. If you make any sound in response to the forbidden rhythm you must sit down. If you hesitate in performing the ‘allowed’ rhythm you must also sit down!
- 2 Ask students to stand up and give them a forbidden rhythm of your choice (either 4 beats long or 8, depending on age and level). It helps to keep the beat with your foot while performing the rhythm so that students have a reference for timing.
- 3 Before the game begins allow them to clap it a few times to internalize it.
- 4 Begin the game. The closer your ‘allows’ rhythms are to the ‘forbidden rhythm’ the harder the game will be. If it is too easy you may also make rhythms longer or more complicated the next round.

Forbidden Pitch:

- 1 Keep in mind that this game is not about pitch matching. It is about critical listening, and having fun singing. For this reason be sure that singing on pitch has no consequence for winning or losing!
- 2 The rules are the same but instead you will sing or play a succession of pitches or a melodic fragment that is ‘forbidden’. This can be very difficult at first so start with just a couple of pitches! You can expand by letting kids know what the pitches are (1 – 3 – 5 – 3, etc.) However, do not say the names as you sing or else they will simply be responding to words and not sound!

Extensions:

Allow students to lead. Vary complexity to up to 4 measures or more!

Variations:

You may also refer to this game as “Poison” rhythm or melody with younger kids. Following this, you might play in a sitting circle and when they get ‘poisoned’ they go in the middle of the circle which is the “shark tank” and become shark meat. This adds some excitement to the game and makes losing more interesting and less boring for the little ones.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Anchor Standard #7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.



LESSON PLAN: Vowels for Tone, Consonants for Diction

Objective:

Students will discover the roles of vowels and consonants when singing.

Resources:

Song recording, lyrics

Procedures:

- 1 Ask students to have a ‘turn and talk’ about the following: “Which is more important when singing the lyrics of a song, the vowels or the consonants?”
- 2 Play a recording of the song with the lyrics displayed so that everyone can become familiar with the lyrics and the tune. Repeat if necessary.
- 3 Next, try singing the song again with the removal of all consonants. (As the teacher, be prepared to model what each line sounds like in a “repeat after me” fashion, practicing one line at a time.)
- 4 Repeat step two, this time singing the entire song only using vowels while the recording plays.
- 5 Ask students to write a short reflection about their vowel-singing experience. Make sure they include some pros and cons of singing only vowels.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Anchor Standard #7: Perceive and analyze artistic work. Anchor Standard #9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work. Common Core State Standards: ELA-Writing: Text Types and Purposes. Example: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.1 - Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.6.3 - Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.



LESSON PLAN: Rote-Singing Method

Objective:

Students will learn to sing a song by ear using one of the oldest and most reliable methods

Resources:

Song recording

Procedures:

- 1 Speak words one line at a time to a single verse and chorus, having students repeat you line by line. Go through it at first in very small snippets - just a few words at a time, then an entire phrase, then an entire stanza.
- 2 Speak words again rhythmically, establishing meter (add snaps or taps for additional pulse) Initiate another “repeat after me” going through the same process – snippets, then phrases, then whole stanzas
- 3 Sing words with pitch, establishing tonality.
- 4 Sing words with pitch this time, establishing tonality. Go through the same process.
- 5 Add musical accompaniment or an instrumental/karaoke recording to support early attempts of singing the song and initiate a sing along.
- 5 Students will be able to sing along with you to an entire verse and chorus!

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Example: MU:Pr5.1.3b – Rehearse to refine technical accuracy, expressive qualities and identified performance challenges. Anchor Standard #7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.



LESSON PLAN: Everyone Likes Singing a Parody

Objective:

Students will create an educational parody based on a popular song they already know and like.

Resources:

Pre-screened recording of student's song choice, lyric sheet of their song choice, parody writing worksheet (see next page)

Procedures:

- 1 Divide students into small groups of 2-4 members.
- 2 Distribute Parody Writing Worksheet.
- 3 Review the worksheet with the students (see worksheet with directions below)
- 4 As soon as students choose their songs, if possible print them on the spot, or before the next class period
- 5 Allow students time to listen to the original song and replace the lyrics with new ones.
- 6 Circulate room and help groups as needed
- 7 Students will record or perform their parodies for their classmates.

Note:

This project may take up to 3 hours or more to complete.

Variation:

Grouping choices can either be made by the students or you can strategically place more advanced student with those that may struggle with such an activity. You can keep the rewrite loose, and treat it as a great way to make singing fun and appealing, or you can use it for its ELA connections. For the latter, you can have students match up every syllable in their rewrite, graphing out the connections!

Worksheet on next page.

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #3: Refine and complete artistic work.

Anchor Standard #4: Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation. Anchor Standard #5: Develop and refine artistic works for presentation. Anchor Standard #8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work. Anchor Standard #7: Perceive and analyze artistic work

Responding - Anchor Standard #10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art. Connecting - Anchor Standard #10



Parody Writing Worksheet

Directions:

Work in small groups to create a parody about any topic you have learned about this school year in Math, Language Arts, Social Studies or Science. To make a parody, simply replace the original lyrics of the song with lyrics of your own. Each group will have two class periods to finish their lyrics. The following music class will be designated for practicing and performing the finished parody.

Step 1: Choose a popular song that your group already knows.

Song Title: _____ **Artist:** _____

Step 2: Choose a topic from another school subject that you would like to make your song about.

Topic: _____ **Subject:** _____

Step 3: Write the new lyrics to your song, making sure they line up with the original song lyrics.

Original Lyrics

Parody Lyrics

_____	_____
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LESSON PLAN: Vocalizing and Pantomiming a Skit

Objective:

Students will explore the expressive capabilities of vocal tone and body movement, creating and communicate a story using vocalization and pantomime

Resources:

Youtube video

Procedures:

- 1 Watch a video from YouTube demonstrating pantomime. Have the students partner up and practice pantomiming a scene for their partner to guess.
- 2 Demonstrate different vocalizations to show students how versatile the human voice is. Invite students to demonstrate a few of their own.
- 3 Allow students the remainder of the period to work in small groups and create a short skit using only their voice and pantomime.
- 4 Each group will perform their skit for the class. The class will try to guess what scene their classmates have created

National Core Arts Standards (Music):

Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #3: Refine and complete artistic work.
Anchor Standard #6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
Anchor Standard #8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work
Anchor Standard #10: Synthesize and relate knowledge an personal experiences to make art.

