Unit 5 - Development of Vocal Technique

Content Area: **Music**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Marking Period 1**
Length: **Ongoing**
Status: **Published**

Brief Summary of Unit

Students will study and refine their ability to sing with conventional and healthy vocal techniques. Students will study vocal anatomy, including major organs and muscles which are involved in singing and breathing, and learn how to maintain vocal health. Study of proper diction techniques, singing tone, and color will assist students in the creation of high quality performances.

Revised June 2025

ELD standards:https://docs.google.com/document/d/1wdmsiGOdCHlrjU-WPvAtENnEgi0EStZXo0uiFYv1Nu4/edit

1.3C.12prof.Pr4	Selecting, analyzing and interpreting work.
1.3C.12prof.Pr4a	Explain the criteria used to select varied repertoire to study based on an understanding of theoretical and structural characteristics of the music, the technical skill of the individual or ensemble, and the purpose or context of the performance.
1.3C.12prof.Pr4b	Demonstrate, using music reading skills (where appropriate), how compositional devices employed and theoretical and structural aspects of musical works impact and inform prepared or improvised performances.
1.3C.12prof.Pr5	Developing and refining techniques and models or steps needed to create products.
1.3C.12prof.Pr5a	Develop strategies to address expressive challenges in a varied repertoire of music, and evaluate their success using feedback from ensemble peers and other sources to refine performances.
1.3C.12prof.Pr6	Conveying meaning through art.
1.3C.12prof.Pr6a	Demonstrate attention to technical accuracy and expressive qualities in prepared and improvised performances of a varied repertoire of music representing diverse cultures, styles, and genres.
1.3C.12prof.Re7	Perceiving and analyzing products.
1.3C.12prof.Re7b	Explain how the analysis of passages and understanding the way the elements of music are manipulated informs the response to music.
1.3C.12prof.Re8	Interpreting intent and meaning.
1.3C.12prof.Re8a	Explain and support interpretations of the expressive intent and meaning of musical works, citing as evidence the treatment of the elements of music, contexts, the setting of the text (when appropriate), and personal research.
1.3C.12prof.Re9	Applying criteria to evaluate products.
1.3C.12prof.Re9a	Evaluate works and performances based on personally or collaboratively developed criteria, including analysis of the structure and context.

Essential Questions

- Why would singers want to use healthy vocal techniques every time they sing?
- How does a singer's vocal technique affect a musical performance?
- What is sound and how is it produced?
- How does body alignment and breathing influence sound production?
- How does a singer articulate consonants and sustain vowels?
- What are the ways a person can keep their voice healthy?
- What is vocal tone and color?
- Why is warming-up important?
- How does proper technique contribute to the balance, intonation, and tone of the entire ensemble?

Students Will Know/Be Skilled At

- The major organs, muscles, and anatomical processes associated with breathing, breath support, and phonation for singing.
- How to properly align their bodies for singing.
- How to breathe for singing, the types of breathing, and how to use breath support.
- How to create resonance and the function of the soft palate.
- How to sing with good, appropriate diction.
- The most common vowel sounds and how to maintain pure vowels.
- The characteristics of and differences between head voice and chest voice, and what belting is.
- How to access the head voice register, and how to negotiate the "passaggio," the break between the head and chest voice.
- The difference between a healthy and a damaged voice and how to care for one’s voice.
- How to change and manipulate tone color and weight in the voice as appropriate for different repertoire.
- Proper body alignment and breathing affects the quality of the sound a singer produces.
- Singing requires awareness and development of the body in relation to the physical demands of performance.
- Each person has only one voice and it is essential to take good care of it.
- Clear and uniform diction is essential to the interpretation and communication of music to an audience.
- Vocal tone and color can be altered and manipulated to suit different musical styles and genres.
- Warming up the voice each day allows a singer to strengthen the muscles used for singing, and to practice important aspects of vocal technique.
- The vocal technique of each member of the ensemble affects the quality of the group.

Learning Plan

- Teacher facilities vocal warm-ups, breathing exercises, and vocalises each class, which will serve to aid in teaching and improving specific vocal issues related to the choral repertoire. Special consideration is given to the register break and using vocalises that are in an appropriate range for each student.

- Students and teacher discuss and demonstrate proper body alignment.
- Students and teacher identify the organs and muscles involved in breathing, breath support, and phonation. Students are asked to label them in pictures and write descriptions of their functions.
- Students and teacher discuss vocal health. How can one keep their voice healthy? Why should we worry about this? How can one's voice become damaged?
- Students are asked to demonstrate good vocal health at all times and teacher will draw attention to, and correct, poor technique within the choral rehearsal.
- Teacher guides students in understanding diction. Students learn basic English and Italian/Latin diction rules, the five pure vowels, and schwa. Students learn voiced and unvoiced consonants, dentalized consonants, elisions, glottal strokes, etc. and how to write diction into their score.
- Students and teacher explore basic concepts of vocal tone and color, including how tone can be shaped through changes in resonance and vocal placement. Together, they evaluate the appropriate vocal quality for each piece of choral repertoire and develop a tone color continuum or scale. This continuum is used to place and compare the tone qualities of both the repertoire being performed and other music they listen to.
- Students and teacher evaluate the class's use of good technique, diction, and tone throughout the rehearsals and performance.

Evidence/Performance Tasks

Students demonstrate differentiated proficiency through both formative and summative assessments in the classroom/rehearsal. Based on individual student readiness and performance, assessments can be implemented as formative and/or summative. The performance tasks listed below are examples of the types of assessments the teacher may use to track student progress and inform instruction.

- Explore and reflect on the essential questions through in-class and online discussions, journaling, turn-and-talk, entrance and exit tickets, peer and self reflections, etc.
- Teacher observation of student performance and participation in rehearsal.
- Individual or small group hearings.
- Written essays and reflections.
- Performances.
- Mid-term and final exams.

-Demonstrate good breathing and breath support when performing as a class and individually.

-Sing with resonance and proper diction when performing as a class and individually.

-Write descriptions of proper vocal technique.

-Evaluate and critique the vocal technique of others and help identify potential technical problems of themselves and their peers.

-Perform choral repertoire in concert with consistent vocal technique, clear diction, and stylistically

appropriate vocal tone color and register.

-Perform vocalises, diatonic scale, prepared repertoire, and sight-singing melodies with appropriate technique, diction, and vocal tone, individually and collectively.

Materials

- Varied and diverse choral and solo vocal repertoire
- The Jenson Sight Singing Course Volume 1
- Worksheets utilized from music theory textbooks or designed by teacher
- Music manuscript books/journals
- Solfege teaching manipulatives, charts, flash cards, etc.
- Acoustic piano
- Online resources with aural and visual examples of breathing, phonation, and vocal techniques, such as "Your Voice: An Inside View"

Suggested Strategies for Modifications

Treble Chorus Accommodations and Modifications