



# Choir Virtual Learning

## Women's Choir/Vocal Technique & Tone Production

May 15, 2020



Lesson: May 15, 2020

**Objective/Learning Target: Students will be reviewing information regarding vocal technique and tone production.**

## Bell Work:

1. Sing through 2 of the warm-ups you miss doing daily at school.
2. What are some things we think about when warming up?
3. What are 3 concepts regarding tone production your teacher mentioned before the closure?

The text "WARM UP!" is rendered in a large, bubbly, cartoonish font. The letters are filled with a gradient of yellow and orange, giving them a glowing, warm appearance. Each letter has a dark brown outline, and the overall style is playful and energetic.

# Elements of Vocal Technique

Vocal technique is a critical part of making quality sounds. The entire body is the instrument of the singer. There are many things to take into consideration when producing sound and a resonant tone.

- Warm-Ups
- Posture
- Breathing
- Vowel Shapes
- Resonance
- Diction



Let's take a look at each one of the bullet points in depth.

# Warm-Ups

Warm-ups are a critical part of getting the body, mind and voice ready for singing. What quality warm-ups achieve.

- Relaxing the body
- Focusing the mind
- Working the entire vocal range
- Focuses on listening to yourself and those around you
- Ear-training exercises that help with tuning.
- Works on technical elements that might be found in the literature being focused on for the day.



shutterstock.com • 662061718

Take part in this warm up along with the choir in this video.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jx7mU2QYX\\_4&list=RDtnJW-8a26OA&index=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jx7mU2QYX_4&list=RDtnJW-8a26OA&index=2)

# Posture

Let's pretend you were a trumpet player for a moment. The trumpet is designed in a way to ensure that it will make sound if air is blown through the instrument properly. Every time you pick up that instrument it looks exactly the same. If the design of the instrument is altered in any way, that will directly impact the sound negatively. Our bodies are like the trumpet. Our sound will be the best when our bodies are positioned in a way to make the highest quality sounds. It's more than just standing tall or standing up straight. It's about maximizing the space above, below and around us, and giving ourselves the opportunity to take in as much air as possible prior to making sound.

Walk through your posture with the gentleman in this video. Can you keep this posture going as you continue to sing?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epNEiWCpslo>

# Breathing

Let's continue to think about the trumpet. The instrument will only sound if the player blows air through it. Without the air, it's useless. Even when air is blown through the instrument, it has to be the correct intensity and duration to make a quality sound. Our singing voices are the same. The intensity and duration of our breaths will inform if we have small childlike and breathy sounds, or healthy supported sounds. Learning to take quality breaths and managing that air will change the quality of your sound and inform how long of a phrase you can sing.

Take a look at this quick video and do these exercises along with the instructor.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xCCKN9ruHVg>

# Vowel Shapes

Let's return to our thoughts about the trumpet. Let's say you are driving a monster truck outside and you accidentally run over that trumpet! So sad you've demolished a musical instrument, you run over and still try to play it to see if it works. You blow air into it and find that it does in fact make a sound, but it sounds horrendous. When you ran over the trumpet, you destroyed the space in the tubes that allows the air to vibrate to make quality sounds. We have tubes in singing as well. You can think of the front of your mouth all the way down to your belly button as one giant tube. Our diaphragm will expand as much as possible to allow air in, our throats will open as much as possible to allow for that space, and the front of our mouths will dictate what vowel we will sing. Without the vowel shape, the sound cannot be focused. Vowel shapes are critical and something amateur singers struggle with greatly. Practice taking in air and focusing those vowel shapes in this video.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W79kLT\\_SNO8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W79kLT_SNO8)



# Resonance/Placement of Sound

Resonance, as discussed in the video, is the type of sound that can be heard anywhere in the concert hall. It is full, supported and engaged. While resonance is dependent upon the breath, it's also dependent upon the placement. Sounds that are too far back in the throat will not carry, and sounds that are too far forward will be bright and strident. We have to find a happy medium between a bright and dark sound for the appropriate resonance. Also, your tongue must be down, forward and out of the way when performing all of the vowels. If the tongue is up or back, you will have trouble singing resonantly and keeping the tone forward.

Try making some different sounds using the placement of your tongue on different vowels.

Also listen to this choir and how they experiment with placement of sound.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zpFvDGC9qU>

# Diction

Diction, or the way we articulate words, is another critical element of vocal technique and tone production. If we are lazy in how we say the words, our singing will be lazy as well. Let's do an experiment.

1. Without putting forth any effort at all, clap your hands twice. What did it feel and sound like?
2. With as much forcible effort as possible, clap your hands twice. Other than it probably hurt, what did it feel and sound like?

Always strive to sing crisp consonants with as much energy as possible. Most people think the main goal of diction is to understand the words. While that is certainly important, it also helps us produce a great tone.

# Lesson Recap

Discuss what you learned about the following elements of vocal technique and tone production.

1. Warming up
2. Posture
3. Breathing
4. Vowel Shapes
5. Resonance
6. Diction



What exercises experienced today would you consider using daily to improve your singing during this closure?

Thank You

*You are  
beautiful,  
strong, smart,  
powerful and  
loved.*

*Dr. Anna Cabeca*