



EMERALD
CHORAL ACADEMY

Vehicular Warm-Ups

Making the Most of the “Choral Commute”

Ryan C. Bede, M.M. - Baritone

Voice Faculty - Belmont University & Lipscomb University

Friday, March 31, 2023
7:00pm PST

INTRODUCTION

- ▶ Singer = ATHLETE
 - ▶ Be intentional/establish a daily routine
 - ▶ Injury prevention
- ▶ “Your voice, your choice”
 - ▶ Care of your whole body = care of your voice
 - ▶ Protect your “investment”
- ▶ Hydration and rest are part of your “rehearsal plan”
 - ▶ Know your voice and what it needs
- ▶ Vocal warm-ups vs. vocal exercises

The “pre-flight check” - FOCUS

- ▶ 3-5 minutes before you start your vehicle and depart
- ▶ “close the door” on day’s events leading up
- ▶ Visualization exercise
 - ▶ See
 - ▶ Hear
 - ▶ Smell
 - ▶ Touch
 - ▶ Taste
- ▶ Reflect on prior rehearsals/practice sessions
 - ▶ Consider recording yourself!
 - ▶ Journaling

The “frame” - POSTURE & ALIGNMENT

- ▶ Many important facets of singing rely heavily on your posture
 - ▶ Intonation can suffer
 - ▶ Two different kinds of “flat”
 - ▶ Efficient inhalation and exhalation
- ▶ “Stand down!”
 - ▶ Envision vertebrae stacking
 - ▶ Knees in front (not bowed/knocked)
 - ▶ 10-and-2 is not just for safe driving
- ▶ A “nod” to releasing the neck
 - ▶ Envision the nose directing the motion, not the chin
- ▶ Torso side-to-side in sitting position
 - ▶ Very easy to slide into poor posture in your vehicle
- ▶ Liberate/shake-out each joint
- ▶ ALLOW and RELEASE - take emphasis away from tension

“No excuses, play like a champion”

It's all about that BREATH

- ▶ Review of respiratory process
 - ▶ two principal muscles that aid in inhalation, *active* exhalation involves many more
- ▶ The 4-step/ “box” method - inhale>suspend>exhale>rest/recoil
- ▶ Make the goal to expand circumferentially
 - ▶ Four breath categories - one is ideal for singers
 - ▶ Release abdomen - don't “look thin”
- ▶ Panting exercise - “elephant, cheetah, chihuahua”
- ▶ Inhale 2 beats, expand exhale 4-6-8
- ▶ Garcia exercise - start from 4, progress toward 8

“Phone”(-ation) it in - THE VOCAL FOLDS

- ▶ Combination of aerodynamics and laryngeal muscle involvement
- ▶ Often our impression of “ideal” choral sound results in VF inefficiencies
- ▶ Finger on larynx, then YAWN
- ▶ Sometimes high, sometimes low - always NEUTRAL
- ▶ SOVTE (lip trill, tongue trill, raspberry, and TEN MORE)
 - ▶ *Peer Gynt*
 - ▶ 5-3-4-2-3-1-2-7-1-5-1
 - ▶ “Guh” exercise

“Gotta catch ‘em all” - REGISTRATION, RESONANCE & ARTICULATION

- ▶ Heavy/light mechanisms (different, sometimes confusing terms)
- ▶ The goal is a perception of “unified” sound
- ▶ Siren/train whistle
- ▶ *Chiaroscuro* - practice both extremes, find a “middle ground”
- ▶ Jaw space - think about molars rather than front teeth
- ▶ Facial muscle massage (“Keep your friends close, your enemies closer”)
- ▶ Tongue stretches
- ▶ SAMPLE EXERCISES
 - ▶ [dju], [wi-o], “Bella signora”, “Meow meow”, [i-e-a]

Finish the hat! - ARTISTRY/EXPRESSION

- ▶ *Messa di voce* exercises
- ▶ Begin each note with a brief moment of *piano*
- ▶ Recorded text
 - ▶ 'Simply speaking simply'
 - ▶ Speak in rhythm
 - ▶ Imitate direction of melody/dynamics in spoken text
- ▶ Recording of rehearsal repertoire - envision your conductor

COOL-DOWN on the way home

- ▶ Straw phonation is your friend (one hand on the wheel!)
- ▶ Pitch glides
- ▶ “Motorboat”
- ▶ Hum [m] [n] [ŋ] 1-3-1
- ▶ [m-i-m-e-m-a-m-o-m-u]
- ▶ Gentle vocal fry
- ▶ “Floaty” [u] descending 5’s

CONCLUSION/THANK YOU

Suggested Resources

Voice Science Works - LOTS of wonderful tools

www.voicescienceworks.org

Vehicular vocalizing to start your day (Dr. Kari Ragan) - NW Voice Conference 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Liw8ZpBbiYI>

Ragan, Kari and Mara Kapsner-Smith. "Vehicular Vocalizing to Start Your Day". *Journal Of Singing* 76, No.2 (November/December 2019): 165-170