“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.”

- I Peter 4:10-11
Professional Background

- Private Voice Teacher, Manitowoc Lutheran High School
- Former WELS Choir Director and Teacher, Arizona Lutheran Academy, Huron Valley Lutheran High School, St. Croix Lutheran High School
- National Association of Teachers of Singing (NATS)
- Music Director, Pathways to Christ Women’s Retreat
- Martin Luther College, 1996
- Arizona State University, Voice Performance/Choral-General Music
I teach singing. 
Good, free, natural technique is paramount for all my students. 
From there different styles require different additional foci. 
Sacred, lieder, opera, jazz, music theater, hip-hop, folk, singer/songwriters all have a place in my studio (and should be welcome in the studio of any qualified singing teacher.)

TO GOD ALONE BE THE GLORY!
Pedagogy

1) the function or work of a teacher; teaching

2) the art or science of teaching; education; instructional methods.
### Understanding Several Techniques: Breaking Them Down

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Emphasis On Relaxation, Alignment and Breathing</th>
<th>Emphasis On Vowel Placement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Alexander Technique</td>
<td>• Vaccai Vocal Method</td>
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<td>• McClosky Technique</td>
<td>• Marchesi Vocal Method</td>
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</table>

“Natural” technique utilizes the best of vocal methods available to find a balance in the “Spiral of Singing”
This spiral contains the principles of beautiful singing.

- Learning can proceed in any direction on the spiral or even skip across.
- As a singer gains more technical mastery, more and more time is spent in the Musical Expressions area.
- Even the best of singers revisit all aspects of singing.
Release of Tension and Positioning The Instrument

- Release tension in legs, spine, shoulders, arms and neck by stretching and manipulation.
- Align instrument by lining up feet, hips, shoulders and ears.
- Position rib cage in a stable and broad, but flexible, high position with the sternum pulled up.
Some Stretches That Are Recommended At Each Rehearsal

ALWAYS ALLOW FOUR MINUTES FOR STRETCHING/RELEASING TENSION

Stretch to release tension in the spine. Be sure to keep elbows at shoulder level.

With hands turned “insideout,” sway from left to right and back to center position.
Additional Recommended Stretches

**Rag Doll Stretch**

Hang down with hands touching floor if possible. Inhale through your nose, exhale through your mouth three times. As you roll up to a standing position, inhale through your nose the whole way. It rushes warm moist air into the nasopharynx area and helps with the warm-up process.

**Chest Stretches**

Place one hand over the other with elbows at shoulder height. Remaining at this height with the arms, pull hands apart until they are parallel to each other (pointing forward) and then release them back to original position. Repeat this stretch for a total of four times and then release hands comfortably down by your sides.
Alignment Issues/Recommendations

- A slumping posture definitely puts inappropriate pressure on the larynx, directly changing the quality of the speaking and singing voice.
- Most voice professionals will understand the importance of **upright posture**, which enables the larynx to find its ideal suspension in the throat.
- “**Think Up**” – we want to be able to use our full height as we sing or speak, without collapsing down into the pelvis. “**Think**” about your head releasing away from the tailbone.
Our Speaking and Singing Voices Work Most Freely When the Following Conditions Are Present:

- the head is poised on top of the spine at C1 (the 1st cervical vertebra/AO Joint).
- the lower jaw hangs from the TM joint
- the hyoid bone hangs from the styloid process
- the larynx itself hangs from the hyoid bone
- the infra-hyoid muscles act as elastic guide wires down to the sternum.
Habitual Patterns Of Too Much Effort

- an over-arching back
- stiffening of neck and throat
- TM joint problems
- Knee-locking habit
- Rib cage “corseting” and “rib reserve”
- Overworking the facial muscles
The Alexander Technique is not about release of tension *per se*, but about efficiency of muscle use.

It is not a relaxation technique, but about balanced strength, coordination, and ease of movement.

It is not about learning deep-breathing exercises, but about relearning the elasticity of the entire thorax and of the muscles involved in breathing. ("allowing breath to return")
It is not posture as a static concept, but about dynamic poise in movement.

It is not meditation but conscious control of the total self, bringing to the conscious level that which has been unconscious and habitual, in order to change habits of thought and movement.

It is how that matters, not the what. We can have awareness of how we are doing whatever we are doing at the moment.

BODY/MIND TO REPRESENT THE WHOLE.
Alexander Technique: What Might It Look Like In A Lesson

• This image shows how a teacher might shift a singer back and forth between standing erect and being in the position of “Monkey.”

• It helps to envision the head and hips as two ends of a teeter-totter, whose fulcrum is located somewhere around the navel.

• It is a very simple image, your back is not literally a board; but as we don’t want a warped, curving board for the teeter-totter, neither do we want a rounded-over back for the Monkey.
Alexander Lie-Down Exercise

• It gives us an opportunity to undo the excess habitual tensions of our daily lives, but it also has the profound effect of reorganizing the head, neck, and spine. Therefore it is restorative and “constructive” as well as restful.

• Offers a freer rib cage as the back releases into its natural length and width.

• Exercise improves head-neck coordination which can lead to a more general undoing of excess muscular work: release of the TM joint, lessening lower jaw and neck tension for those who find it hard to relax these areas when standing.
Opening the Vocal Tract

- Released jaw, flexible and free of tension.
- Soft palate raised, but no tension in the pillars.
- Tongue flexible but independent.
- Throat open with the feeling of deep inhalation.
- Larynx low and stable, but not pressed down.
“Drop your jaw!” … Yes and No

- **Release the jaw at the TM joint** to change vowels. Mobility of this joint enables the lower jaw to drop down by the force of gravity, and we want to be able to take advantage of that force.
- **Massage the jaw and face** for better elasticity and less constriction.
- **The McClosky Technique** spends a lot of time on this.

Example: T M Joint
Two examples that contradict correct vocal technique are those based on a dropped jaw and mask and on fluted lips.

The “dropped jaw” principle is based on dropping the jaw too far on any vowel in any range; the “dropped mask” principle allows the mask to drop (with no involvement of the cushions under the eyes or the upper lip) on all vowels and consonants.
“Drop your jaw!” ... Yes and No

- The jaw which drops too far does not allow for a clean enunciation of text or for the correct sitting of tones; it causes tones to be sung all in one color and, many times, under pitch, especially on the brighter vowel sounds.

- Also by fluting the lips, it pulls the soft palate down and out of position and reduces high range in singing.

- Vowel sounds need back space and an arched soft palate, initiated by the inside smile.

Fluted Lips (Incorrect)
Close your mouth but not your teeth and SMILE as though you are smiling at someone across the room; a smile you do not wish to be noticed by others. You will feel a slight muscular action on the cushion under your eyes.

The Inside Smile activates the soft palate.
Visual of Inside Smile
Common Incorrect “Inside Smile”

- Some choral directors and singing teachers request an external smile with the lips when performing, a request impossible to fulfill without distortion of the intended vowel sound.
- Fortunately there are other choral directors who ask their singers to **smile with the eyes**, or to think of an “inner smile,” or perhaps to “smile with the back of your mouth” and leave the face alone.
Common Incorrect Inside Smile

Grimace
The domed soft palate plays an important role in changing the quality of a voice, and is one of the components of an acoustically resonant voice.

When the soft palate is lowered rather than domed, the voice is likely to be overly nasal, with too much sound focused up into the nose. By simply learning to include an appropriately domed soft palate in every vowel shape, the speaker/singer can de-nasalize the voice.
Soft Palate

- If the soft palate is lifted or domed, it almost completely seals off the nasal cavities, allowing the main body of the sound wave to come out through the mouth instead of exiting through the nasal cavities.
- While the soft palate primarily domes upward, the arches can create more space in the horizontal plane as they descend to the sides of the tongue (palatoglossal) and disappear into the walls of the throat (palatopharyngeal).
The raising of the soft palate is coupled with the lowering of the tongue base and the lower jaw, appropriate to the specific vowel.
What Should You Do With The Tongue?

- The tongue is a strong muscle that needs to be tamed for singing. It can cause tension/damage in vocal cords and larynx.
- It should lay relaxed and limp in the mouth. (as wide as the state of Texas)
- The tip of the tongue should usually rest against the back surface of the bottom teeth.

The tongue will move as a unit with the jaw as it releases at the TM Joint.
For Correcting The Pressed Or Pulled Tongue

**Ng-ah Exercise:**

Begin with width under the eyes and a dropped jaw, leaving it dropped as you lift the tongue from the back, keeping the tip against the lower front teeth. Gently lift up the back of the tongue speaking the sound ”ng” with the jaw remaining still. Let the tongue fall back as you speak the syllable “ah.” Do this four times, loosening the back tongue muscles. On the fifth spoken “ng-ah” the jaw should come up and be allowed to swing down. After this exercise has been practiced by speaking the word, it should be further practiced by singing the exercise on one pitch.
What Does An Open Tract Look Like?

An imaginary representation of a threedimensional open throat that is tall, broad and deep, contributing to the bright/dark tone or the chiaroscuro tone quality. The funnel then gathers the tone forward to a focal point and the tone is directed and amplified into the room.
The Larynx (Voice Box)

- It is suspended in your neck from your hyoid bone.
- It’s biological function is to protect your lower respiratory tract.
- Your larynx is really just a valve on top of your trachea, connected at the front, with the ability to open and close at the back.

- The valve function serves to prevent air from escaping from the lungs, to prevent foreign substances from entering the lungs, and to expel those substances if they start to invade.
- The other function is to communicate thoughts and feelings through singing or speaking by the buzzing sound made in the vocal folds/cords housed inside larynx.
The Pharynx

The three divisions of the Pharynx:

- The Laryngopharynx (which opens into the larynx and the very top of the esophagus)
- The Oropharynx (which opens into the oral or mouth cavity)
- The Nasopharynx (which opens into the nasal cavities).
The Pharynx

- The wall of this complex pharyngeal tube contains constrictor muscles which do the work of swallowing.
- Relative release or relaxation of these constrictor muscles comes during inhalation.
- For singing or speech purposes we want these constrictor muscles to be in balance with the other throat muscles and in a relatively passive state.
Breathing For Singing

- Inhale with side ribs as well as diaphragm. (release or allowing the breath to return)
- Slow down the rate of exhalation by using intercostal and abdominal muscles.
- Use the concept of appoggio breathing – the voice “leans” on the breath.
Proper Breathing

- **Diaphragm separates thorax from abdomen.**
- **At rest, or at the end of exhalation, it nestles up inside your ribcage, attaching at the spine, sternum and the bottom ribs, creating a tight seal between your chest and abdomen.**
- **Your lungs rest right on top of it and will move when your diaphragm moves.**
Proper Breathing

- When your diaphragm contracts, it flattens out.
- The flattening creates a vacuum in your chest and when you inhale, air comes in through your open vocal tract and fills your lungs.
- As a result the diaphragm pushes against your abdominal organs and you will feel them move out.
A Few Other Interesting Facts

- During the inspiratory part of the breathing cycle two things happen: the rib cage expands slightly upwards and outwards in all directions, while at the same time the domed diaphragm contracts and descends. The thoracic cavity thus expands in all dimensions automatically, lowering the air pressure within the lungs. Air rushes in from the outside in order to equalize the pressure. Use that Gravity!!!

- The diaphragm does its work only during the active inspiratory portion of the breathing cycle. It is not a muscle that is capable of pushing itself upwards. It is a muscle that contracts and descends during inhalation; and it resumes its momentary rest position after relaxing upwards into the dome—and the cycle continues as long as we are alive.
A Few Other Interesting Facts

- A listener will hear breath being “sniffed” in when one partially closes the nasal passages with internal muscles. Let the breath flow in quietly through the nose by relaxing that unnecessary constriction.

- A listener will also hear “gasping” as the air comes in through your mouth when you constrict the extrinsic or intrinsic muscles of the larynx. If you release that unnecessary throat constriction, the air can then flow in quietly through your mouth.

- If you open both the nasal and throat passageways simultaneously, even more air can flow in quickly, yet quietly. It matters not now much air you want nor how quickly you want it to come in—we usually do not need to hear it.
Every breath we breathe from the time we are born until the time we die passes through the glottis, which is the space between the edges of the vocal folds (vocal cords). The vocal folds themselves are housed within the larynx (“voice box”), a structure made up of several cartilages and perched on top of the trachea (windpipe). Breath or air is essential for being alive and for making sound. Vocalized (or voiced) sound results from the mind’s intention, plus airflow from the lungs, creating vocal fold vibration.
This voiced sound (or phonation) is caused by a very rapid opening and closing of the vocal folds, and we describe this event as “vibration” of the vocal folds. The resultant buzz produces sound that can turn into speaking, singing..... The vibrating vocal folds chop up the stream of air at a phenomenal rate of speed per unit of time (called frequency), producing a sound wave that pours through the vocal tract (the internal throat, mouth, and nasal cavities). The vocal tract gives the sound wave some identity as a vowel, which turns that sound wave into recognizable language.

GREAT EXPLANATION!
A Few Other Interesting Facts

- It is not actually breath that carries the sound to the back of the room. Breath becomes a sound wave at the vocal fold level. Carrying power is a much more complex phenomenon than a mere blast of air. A genuinely resonant voice carries well, and this is usually a matter of vocal training unless God generously provided.

Mastering well-coordinated breath inhalation and exhalation while singing or speaking is IMPERATIVE for good vocal health of the Larynx.
Onsets and Releases

- Onset of tone is coordinated between breath and glottal closure.
- Sound is neither breathy nor pressed.
- Glottal stops are not used to initiate sound.
- Upper harmonics are initially apparent and tone has immediate presence.
- Releases are also coordinated, with harmonics apparent to the end of the tone.
- Tone is not stopped by a closure of the glottis, but by cessation of breath.
- A well-coordinated onset is “just right.”
For the onset of tone you have three choices:

- The pressed onset (sometimes called a glottal attack)
- The breathy onset
- A coordinated onset (optimal choice, flow phonation)

Sometimes this onset is also called a “silent h” onset. Beginning the tone this way, with a balance between the two extremes, will produce the most sound for the least amount of work.
Onsets

- With the coordinated onset the goal is for the vocal folds to adduct (come together) precisely when the breath flow begins, with the right amount of pressure, to make the desired tone and pitch.
- This perfect combination is controlled by the brain and ear and although an intuitive process, you can practice and cultivate it.
- This is what many choral directors/voice teachers call “singing on the breath”; it is the most efficient combination of airflow and muscle pressure, and it provides the best “floppy” action of the vocal folds.
Releases

- The best release, like the onset, is a coordinated one, where the vocal folds abduct (open) precisely as the airflow is turned around and inhalation begins.
- This ensures a consistency of tone quality throughout each phrase and within each musical paragraph as tone begin and ends.
- The constant balance between “hard” and “soft” onsets and releases is a major contributing factor to legato singing and freedom in the voice, a product of dynamic equilibrium in both breathing and phonation.
Resonance

- Optimize the tone to produce a solid “core” sound. Each vowel has a distinct shape that has an optimal sound throughout the range.

“Tone Factory” and “Vowel factory”

“Upper harmonics”, “Singer’s formant = ringing quality”
The Hard Palate

- There are two distinct parts of the palate—the hard palate and the soft palate.
- The soft palate is the moveable portion of the roof of the mouth. It is the rear continuation of the hard palate and includes the uvula which hangs down into view.
The Hard Palate

- In contrast to the mobile soft palate and the nearby arches, the hard palate is a relatively inflexible bony plate covered with mucous membrane. It arches upwards and backwards from the upper front teeth and divides the nasal cavity from the mouth (oral cavity).
- The hard palate plays two significant roles in speaking and singing.
  1) In conjunction with the tongue, it assists in the articulation of several consonant sounds—[t], [d], [g], [k], some kinds of [r], [j], [l], [n], and [ŋ]. The hard palate helps create these and other consonants by being one of the articulatory structures that constricts the airflow, each kind of constriction producing a different consonant sound.
  2) It is a sensitive surface that can be a focal point for the sound wave arising from the vocal folds. This sensitivity is a very useful tool for enhancing the speaking voice when lecturing or acting, and it is essential for singing.
A Sound Wave

- A sound wave, even a very quiet one, carries farther than breath alone; and a moderately loud sound wave carries much farther than a moderate expenditure of breath.

- It is not the amount of breath that determines whether we are heard at the back of the room. What matters is how we use that breath, coupled with the skill of developing genuine resonance.

- Re-sonance=re-sounding=sounding again=enlargement or enhancement or enrichment or amplification of the original sound.

- Since resonance is the end result of a developmental process, rather than something we either have or don’t have, we can build a resonant speaking or singing voice.

- We can think about it as building our own internal amplification system.
Becoming aware of the buzz on the hard palate (for the speaking range pitches) is a place to start, and thinking about a more intense buzz will draw a little more breath through the system.

Excess breath pressure is likely to disrupt the delicately balanced vocal mechanism because muscular overwork anywhere in the system affects the voice.

The mental intention of a louder sound will invite a bit more breath, and will result in the vocal folds using this energy to create a sound wave with greater amplitude.

The sound wave is then sent through the enlarged vocal tract. If things are well organized in the vocal tract, a louder and more resonant sound will be heard.
Efficiently operating vocal folds produce a very complex sound wave (breathy or “leaky” vocal folds produce a less complex sound wave)—and this complex sound includes the pitch that our ears hear (called the fundamental frequency) and, simultaneously, a series of higher-pitched sounds that are called harmonics (sometimes termed partials or overtones).

**Spectral Analysis**

A measure of “chiaroscuro”, a balance between front and back focus points or a balance between “dark” and “bright.”
The task of the vocal folds is to provide the frequency. This is most healthfully and effectively done by allowing the vocal folds to find their proper balance between the mass and tension for each frequency. A slightly different balance of these elements is desirable for every frequency, depending on the kind of sound quality desired.

Learning the ideal mass-tension ratio required by every pitch throughout the entire speaking and singing range is an awesome task. If we learn these vocal fold adjustments, we can develop a smooth and consistent quality throughout the range.
Focus Of The Tone

- Tone has both point and space, or a chiaroscuro (bright/dark) quality.
- Tone projects forward in the room and resounds throughout the room.
- Singer’s Formant is present. “Ringing quality”
- Tone is clear but has dimensionality.
“Breathy” Tone

- A speaker or singer with a breathy tone, a “leaky” set of vocal folds—inefficient use of the breath already flowing out.
- The “breathy” tone results from air escaping through the glottis instead of being turned into a sound wave.
- The actor/singer needs to plug the leaks through imagery and guided vocal technique exercises.
“Belting” is the label that is often given to the style of singing that is currently used by some singers in musical theater productions, by some professional jazz singers, by some gospel singers, and by some rock singers. It is not primarily a matter of what is often termed “support,” nor primarily a matter of breath, but of how the entire vocal mechanism is used technically.

Belting is a specific vocal color used in many non-classical styles. When learning to belt, concentration must be on directing the tone into the nasopharynx.
It is not a true belting sound if the soft palate becomes involved, and because the soft palate is not involved, there is a great deal of nasality.

Before learning to belt, the “natural” singing technique should be well established.

All good singing is resonant and supported. The only difference between classical, or belt, or blues, or any other style is where the sound is focused.

Belting is NOT raw chest tone. The raw chest tone makes it difficult to make dynamic changes or variations of colors on one pitch.
Belting

- Belting requires more focus and demands complete engagement of the lower abdominal area, a sensation all singers should have.
- Belting is a development of resonance in the nasal cavity and should be directed with open back space.
- It requires **maximum focus** with resonance, never without.
- The best belting sound requires the vowels to sit very forward in the hard palate area rather than the soft palate area. (red hot candy spot)
- Never push the voice!
• Registers are balanced and the transitions blended.
• Range is seamless with no register events.
Blending Registers

- “Chest Tone” – sometimes referred to as the “heavy” mechanism
- “Head Tone” – sometimes referred to as the “light” mechanism
- “Passagio” – the passageway from “heavy to light” mechanism. It is also known as the “middle voice.”
Blending Registers

- Most errors occur in “passagio” (passageway between chest and head voice); also known as the area where you have a “crack” in your voice.
- Arch Over – means for the singer to feel that he/she is singing on the “top” of each note, by feeling the tone go up and over the soft and hard palate.
- Full Voice – means that the singer’s voice should sound like one tone quality from the extreme top of their vocal range to the bottom.
Vowel Modification

• An intentional, slight adjustment made to the sound (acoustics) of a vowel, by altering the basic way in which a vowel is articulated, with the goal of attaining more comfortable and pleasing tone production, especially in the higher part of the singer’s range.

• Singers should sing vowels that free up the voice.
Vowel Modification

- When vowels are correctly modified, the singer experiences more comfort, the tone is more beautiful, and the air supply lasts longer.

- With the aid of vowel modification, singers will have fewer intonation problems, better resonance across their ranges, more carrying power, easier production of forte (loud) and piano (soft), clearer diction, and a much better blend.
Vowel Modification

Vowel Modification is linked to two major aspects of singing:

- Acoustics (including optimal resonance, balance of tone and smooth registration)
- Protection of the vocal instrument through correct and healthy laryngeal adjustments.
Vowel Modification Chart

Head Register (involves passagio and up)

Brings sung pitch and the resonance of vowels into their best relationship.

- “ee” sound $\rightarrow$ “ih” sound $\rightarrow$ “eh” sound (lower jaw) (lower jaw)
- “oo” sound $\rightarrow$ “oh” sound $\rightarrow$ “ah” sound
- “ay” sound $\rightarrow$ “eh” sound $\rightarrow$ “a” sound
- “I” sound $\rightarrow$ “aw” sound
Articulation

- Independence of the jaw, lips, tongue and soft palate is cultivated to form consonants and vowels.
- Articulator movements are coordinated with the diaphragm to energize consonants.
- Vowel/consonant and consonant/vowel joins are swift with no anticipation or shadowing.
- Diphthongs are precise and appropriate.
A vowel is primarily an internal matter, interior shaped space, with the lips having relatively little to do with it.

This vowel space transmits or transfers a sound wave from the sound source (the vibrating vocal folds within the larynx) to the outside world.

Vowels contribute communicative meaning to this sound wave when coupled with articulated consonants, which are the other common linguistic sound that we make.

The shape of the vocal tract (throat and oral cavities) is what gives spoken or sung sound its vowel identity.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vowels</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Every vowel in every language has its own distinct shape within this vocal tract.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Vowels are the components of speech or song that carry most of the sound.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Speech made up entirely of consonants would hardly get past the lips.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Consonants

- A consonant creates an interruption in the stream of vowel sounds, chopping up the stream into recognizable syllables, words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. Consonants should only minimally interrupt this smoothly flowing stream of vowels. In addition to the role of defining the spoken or sung vowel sound, consonants also give texture and color to the language. Consonants are formed within the vocal tract—the primary articulators being the tongue (tip, blade or body, and rear), teeth, lips, and hard palate, especially the alveolar ridge.

- Consonants must be crisp, compact, and clear, and we can learn to do not more and no less than is required by the situation. Too little consonant in a large room means we will not be understood. Too much consonant in relation to the vowel, however, can also leave us in the dark.
If we learn to shape our vowels and articulate the consonants efficiently, we will be easily understood while using an efficient amount of energy.

A common unnecessary use (or misuse) of facial muscles is when a student is asked to shape their lips like a trumpet in order to “project” the sound. This request actually makes it impossible to have the necessary muscle flexibility for the complex coordinated act of shaping vowels and articulating the companion consonants, especially on higher pitches.
Consonants

- My recommendation based on training and experience is to evaluate which consonants you would begin with regarding warm-ups.
- Many choral warm-ups start with an “l”, “m,” or an “n” consonant because the goal is to place the vowel in the most resonant part of the nasopharynx area.
- However, if the “inside smile” and the “open back space” is not mastered before introducing these warm-ups; they will physically lower the soft palate or cause tongue tension and develop habits for the singer that is harmful to their vocal health.
- I would suggest starting with pure vowels, the whispered “h” sound, or consonants like “k”, “d”, “z”, and “t” in that order.
The IPA is the major as well as the oldest representative organization for phoneticians. It was established in 1886 in Paris.

- The aim of the IPA is to promote the scientific study of phonetics and the various practical applications of that science.
- In furtherance of this aim, the IPA provides the academic community world-wide with a notational standard for the phonetic representation of all languages – the International Phonetic Alphabet (also IPA).
- The IPA is useful in developing a consistent “marking” system regarding how to pronounce vowels and consonants in repertoire. This could be a helpful tool if choral directors and voice teachers consistently used such markings efficiently.
### What IPA Looks Like

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) Symbol</th>
<th>English equivalent sound spelling underlined</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vowels</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>[i]</td>
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<td>[ɪ]</td>
<td>sit</td>
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<td>father</td>
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<td>[ʌ]</td>
<td>shut</td>
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<td>[ə]</td>
<td>about</td>
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<td>[o]</td>
<td>obey</td>
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<tr>
<td>[œ]</td>
<td>French nasal, no English equivalent; sing a pure [o] with a lowered soft palate</td>
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<tr>
<td>[o]</td>
<td>yawn</td>
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<td>[u]</td>
<td>put, book</td>
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<tr>
<td>[ŋ]</td>
<td>used to denote the subtle tongue changes in the [ŋ] in words like sing, sang and song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[p]</td>
<td>get</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[r]</td>
<td>red</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[s]</td>
<td>sit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ʃ]</td>
<td>shine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[t]</td>
<td>tip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[θ]</td>
<td>thing</td>
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<tr>
<td>[ð]</td>
<td>these</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[v]</td>
<td>victory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[w]</td>
<td>water</td>
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<tr>
<td>[hw]</td>
<td>white</td>
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<tr>
<td>[j]</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[z]</td>
<td>zebra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[ʒ]</td>
<td>vision</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What IPA Looks Like With Vowels and Consonants

Vowel Quadrilateral with key words

General places of articulation for the primary consonants in American English.

The relationship between the articulators and their corresponding places or articulation.
Vocal Health Issues

- If we overdo the muscular work involved in forming the speech/singing sounds (vowels and consonants), and especially if we engage too much of the whole system in the act, we can damage the voice.
- Vocal nodes/nodules arise from excess muscular work in the wrong places—too much, too loud, too high, for too long. Generalized overwork eventually affects the vocal cords.
- Vocal nodes/nodules are like calluses on the vocal folds (vocal cords), resulting from abusive use of the voice, both speaking and singing.
- Vocal nodes build up over time, as did calluses on our fingers from holding a pencil too tightly when we learned to write in elementary school.
Vocal Health Issues

- Adolescent voices need careful nurturing. Their voices are developing; they really don’t have a complete instrument until they are in their early twenties (this will vary by voice and gender).
- They must not be pushed into singing with a vocal quality that they are not developmentally ready or able to produce. Avoid literature that is too vocally demanding, even if they can “sing the notes.”
- This takes a lot of discipline on the part of choral director/voice teacher, of course we would like the thrill of more demanding literature, but remember that teenagers sometimes don’t have the same voice two days in a row because of all the changes.
- Be patient and value vocal freedom above a “mature” sound or dynamic extremes.
Vocal Health Issues

- Vocal abuse, can also happen suddenly, screaming at a rock concert or athletic game, when the more blister-like polyps may appear.
- Unlike nodes, polyps are less likely to heal simply by re-learning healthy vocal behaviors.
- If there is any suspicion of either nodes or polyps (loss of high notes, husky rough speaking voice, chronic-laryngitis, crackling or intermittent shutting off of singing sound, sudden excessive breath escaping when speaking or singing), the singer should be seen by a laryngologist.
- Rehabilitation means learning to identify and undo the problematic speaking or singing habits that cause the nodes or polyps in the first place.
• Intonation is precise with no gliding into pitches.
• Pitched consonants are sung on the correct pitches.
• Sostenuto and legato are maintained from pitch to pitch and throughout phrases.
• Voice has flexibility and agility.
• Dynamics are appropriately executed for intended emotional affect.
• Vibrato is appropriated and controlled.
Some Issues To Keep In Mind Regarding Performance Anxiety

Music Students’ Top Mental Challenges

- Worrying or caring too much about what others think
- Performance anxiety or fear that adversely affects performance
- Lack of confidence or presence of self-doubt
- Need to strive for perfection and an obsession with technical skills
- Lack of trust in learned skills
Goals for area
Lutheran high school choirs

- Establish a love of singing as an expression of faith
- Lay a foundation with good habits in the following areas:
  - Release of Tension/Positioning of Instrument
  - Opening Vocal Tract and Breathing
  - Onsets, Releases, and Registers
  - Focusing the Tone and Articulation
  - Musical Expression
- Each student cares about how they use their voice. They really want tools that will carry them for a lifetime.
Suggested Reading: Books

Articles, Bible Study and DVD reviewed for Presentation

- Tiefel, Katherine. *Making the Most of Every Minute*. Worship the Lord. No. 52, January 2012

**BIBLE STUDY**


**DVD (disagreed with a lot of what DVD demonstrated)**