**Basics of Singing: Chester County Night School**

MAKE POSTERS

* **Guidelines for Voice Work**
* **Vocal Hygiene**
* **Basic Music Terminology** (pitch/note/tone)

Thursdays, 700-830 PM – 90 minutes/class

September 22 – November 3, 2011 (7 sessions)

**Week 1 – Introduction: Posture and Breathing** (September 22)

1. **Introductions** (15 minutes)
   1. Introduce myself
   2. Students tell class (while I fill out Student Intake Form): name, age, experience, music style, goals
   3. Introduction to *Singing for Dummies*:
      1. I will give some assigned readings, but we will not read entire book.
      2. I will often use my own methods rather than following the book, but you are encouraged to read the book as supplementary material.
      3. CD contains exercises to train and develop the voice. Regular practice is essential. (We’ll talk more about this later.)
      4. Overview of book, pp. 3-5
2. **Guidelines for Voice Work** (5 minutes)
3. **Chapter 3: Alignment** (10 minutes)
   1. Why efficient posture matters:
      1. Energy
      2. Tension reduction
      3. Breathing
      4. Resonance
      5. Confidence
   2. Look at Fig. 2-1, p. 18
   3. Use tracks on alignment from *Voice Book* CD (students can read Chapter 2 later for more detail)
4. **Chapter 4: Breathing** (25 minutes)
   1. Follow my routine. (Students can read book later, esp. for “troubleshooting.)
   2. Lip trills:
      1. voiceless
      2. with voice
      3. sung **[CD, Track 2]**
5. **Assign Homework** (5 minutes): Practice posture and breathing (from *Voice Book* CD) and lip trills (*Singing for Dummies* CD, Track 2)

**Week 2 – Exploring the Voice, Muscle Building, and Group Singing** (September 29)

1. **Guidelines for Voice Work** (5 minutes, 700-705 PM)
2. **Review/Warm-Up** (15 minutes, 705-720 PM)
   1. Practice posture and breathing exercises from *Voice Book* CD
3. b. Practice Tracks 1 & 2 (intro and lip trill tracks) from *Singing for Dummies* CD
4. **Chapter 5: Muscle Building** (30 minutes, 720-750 PM)
   1. Laryngeal massage
   2. Making sound
      1. Sign
      2. Siren
      3. Owl
      4. Repeat noticing physical sensations (kinesthetic awareness/memory)
   3. Defining Tone
   4. Flexing Your Singing Muscles
   5. Matching Pitch: Tone deafness vs. pitch matching **[CD, Track 3]**
   6. Releasing Tension: Tongue jaw isolations **[CD, Track 4]**
5. **Group Singing:** “Edelweiss” (20 minutes, 750-810 PM)
6. **Handout: Vocal Hygiene** (extra reading: Chapter 24) (10 minutes, 810-820 PM)
7. **Assign Homework and Introduce Individual Lessons** (10 minutes, 820-830 PM)
   1. **Exercises:** *Singing for Dummies* CD, Tracks 2, 3 & 4
   2. **Reading on musical notation (optional)**
      1. Edition 1: Chapters 1 (pp. 10-12) and 18 (pp. 216-219)
      2. Edition 2: Chapters 1 (pp. 10-11)
   3. **Reading on voice types:** Chapter 2, pp. 17-26 (read or skim)
   4. **Reading on selecting songs:** Chapter 16, pp. 211-220 (optional) and song list, pp. 308-315, Appendix A
   5. **Next class: individual sessions with me**
      1. I hear each student sing.
      2. Identify voice type, talk about strengths/weaknesses.
      3. Pick solo songs
      4. Logistics: Sign up for 15-minute time slots. Come 10 minutes early, wait in living room until I come get you. If you can’t make the class date, we’ll set up another time.

**Week 3 – Individual Lessons** (October 6)

**Week 4 – Muscle Building, Beautiful Tone, Performance Anxiety, Group & Solo Singing** (October 13)

1. **Body Warm-Up & Breathing** (10 minutes, 700-710 PM)
   1. Stretches and Laryngeal Massage
   2. Bouncing Tongue/Jaw: 1-2-3-4-5-4-3-2-1 on “yah”
2. **Chapter 6: Acquiring Beautiful Tone** (30 minutes, 710-740 PM)
   1. **Breath/Tone Coordination**
      1. Lip and/or tongue trills: 3-2-1-7-1 **[CD, Track 6]**
      2. “Ho, ho, ho,” “Ha, ha, ha,” and “Hey!”
      3. Downward slides, sighs, and sirens
   2. **Sustaining Sound**
      1. Legato on “oh,” repeat on “ah”: 1-3-5-3-1 **[CD, Track 5]**
      2. Descending on “oh,” repeat on “ah”: 5-4-3-2-1-5(fermata)-4-3-2-1 **[CD, Track 7]**
   3. **Vibrato** 
      1. Too slow = poor breath coordination
      2. Too fast = throat tension
      3. Inability to sing vibrato = throat tension
      4. Only needed for certain styles
      5. Exercise: Straight tone > vibrato **[CD, Track 8]**
3. **Chapter 10: Practicing** (15 minutes, 740-755 PM)
   1. **Where:** a quiet place where you can concentrate; have CD player or computer; should stand most of the time;
   2. **When:** consider your body and energy, possible distractions, and neighbors/housemates
   3. **How Long:** 15-20 minutes (beginners); 30-60 minutes (experienced singers)
   4. **Other Considerations:** Record yourself; use mirror
   5. **Parts of a Practice Session:**
      1. Body Warm-Up: stretching, breathing, massage, relaxation (pp. 119-120)
      2. Vocal Warm-Up: exercises on CD (pp. 121-124)
      3. Learning and Practicing a Song:
         1. Listen to song
         2. Sing melody on “la”
         3. Speak words in rhythm
         4. Sing melody with words
         5. Troubleshooting:
            1. Not enough breath: lip trill tough phrases
            2. Throat tenses for high notes: lip trill high parts, while touching neck to be sure it’s relaxed
            3. Voice is tired: rest!
      4. Any questions on practicing?
4. **Singing:** Group (“Yesterday”), Individuals (20 minutes, 755-815 PM)
5. **Assign Homework:**
   1. **Practice:** Warm up body & voice (*Singing for Dummies*, Tracks 2-8); practice solo song
   2. **Reading:** 
      1. **Required:** Chapter 19 (Performance Anxiety)
      2. **Optional:** Chapter 12 (Flexibility & Range)

**Week 5 – Resonance, Diction, Registration, Range, Performance Anxiety, Solo Singing** (October 20)

1. **Warm-Ups**
   1. **Body Warm-Up:** stretching, breathing, massage, relaxation
   2. **Vocal Warm-Up:**
      1. **Resonance:** humming (forward resonance: 1-2-3-4-5-4-3-2-1 on “mmm”) and yawn (back space: 1-2-3-4-5-4-3-2-1 on “ah”)
      2. **Vowels** (Chapter 8)**:**
         1. Back vowels: Figure 8-2 [CD Track 9]: 5-4-3-2-1 [u-ʊ-o-ɔ-ɑ / oo, ou, oh, aw, ah]
         2. Front vowels: Figure 8-4 [CD Track 10]: 5-4-3-2-1 [i-I-e-ɛ- ɑ / ee, ih, ay, eh, ah]
         3. Diphthongs: “oh” (“NO”) and “ay” (“HEY”)
      3. **Consonants** (Chapter 9)**:** 
         1. Tip consonants: Figure 9-1, p. 108 [CD Track 11]: 5-4-3-2-1
            1. loh, noh, loh, noh, loh
            2. doo, too, doo, too, doo
            3. zah, sah, zah, sah, zah
            4. thy, thigh, thy, thigh, thy
            5. row, row, row, row, row
         2. Soft palate consonants: Figure 9-2, p. 109 [CD Track 12]: 1-3-5-3-1
            1. key, go, key, go, key
            2. sing, sing, sing, sing, sing
         3. Lip consonants: Figure 9-3, p. 111 [CD Track 13]: 1-2-3-4-5-4-3-2-1
            1. poo, boo, poo, boo, poo, boo, poo, boo, poo
            2. woh, moh, woh, moh, woh, moh, woh, moh, woh
            3. fah, vah, fah, vah, fah, vah, fah, vah, fa
         4. Combination consonants: Figure 9-4, p. 114 [CD Track 14]:

5-4-3-2-1—5—1—

* + - * 1. zhah (5-4-), shah (3-2-), zhah (1—), shah (5—), zhah (1—)
        2. Joe (5-4-), Choh (3-2-), Joe (1—), Choh (5—), Joe (1—)
    1. **Registration** (Chapter 11)**:** Chest (speaking), Head (singing), Middle (mix)
    2. **Flexibility & Range** (Chapter 12)**:** 
       1. Staccato: Figure 12-1, p. 156 [CD Track 35]: 1-1-1-1-3-5-8-5-3-1 [on “fah”]
       2. Messa di voce: Figure 12-2, p. 157, [CD Track 36]: on “A” pitch [on “oo,” “ee” and “oh”]
       3. Agility:
          1. Figure 12-5, p. 159 [CD Track 39]: see book
          2. Figure 12-6, p. 159 [CD Track 40]: see book
          3. Figure 12-7, p. 160 [CD Track 41]: see book
       4. Intervals: Figure 12-9, p. 160 [CD Track 43]: see book

1. **Performance Anxiety:** Preparation, Deep Breathing, Practice
2. **Individual Songs**
3. **Email Homework**
   1. Body/voice warm-ups (CD Tracks 2-14, 35-36, 39-41, 43); practice solo song
   2. Reading: Catch up on previously assigned readings from Singing for Dummies, especially Chapter 19 (Performance Anxiety) and Chapter 12 (Flexibility & Range).

**Week 6 – Individual Lessons** (October 29)

**Week 7 – Group & Solo Singing and Q&A** (November 3)

1. Warm-Up
2. Registration (Chapter 11)
3. Individual Songs
4. Q&A