

The Duke Ellington School Voice / Speech Theatre Dept. 2011 - 2012

Sophomore / Junior class Teacher: Denise Diggs

Course Syllabus

Objectives for each student:

- To rediscover the natural way our voice works
- To stimulate the impulse for deep, centered, diaphragmatic breathing
- To identify, develop, and improve vocal tone, articulation, structural understanding, posture, and relaxation with selected exercises from the Linklater method and the Speaking Clearly text
- To establish an effective physical and vocal warm-up
- To require a journal to be written - personal problem words/sentences/ habits/impressions
- To create honest and open communication with each student addressing and evaluating their vocal needs

Class instruction:

Sept.-Oct. Teacher and student expectations discussed

Body awareness- The skeletal, balance of weight, posture: Unvoiced group warm-ups

Relaxation exercises- loosening/releasing muscles/identifying areas of tension

Jaw, soft palate, tongue, and lip exercises taught

Breath/Rib Awareness

Discovering the Yawn/Deep voiced sighs/sound/phonation

Oct.-Nov.

Voiced group warm-up taught

Channel resonators/tonal action/vibration of sound – exercises

Basic structural articulation exercises explored and practiced

Work on individual problem words/consonants/vowels

Poetry and text assigned

Require students to write and practice their personal physical /vocal warm-up from learned exercises

Nov.-Dec.

Individual and group physical/vocal warm-ups practiced and evaluated. Review journal

Voice power/amplification exercises: pure whisper, stage whisper, intimate voice, full voice, The Call

Go over articulation problems and drill work / Evaluate student's skills with assigned poetry and text

Jan.-Mar.

Vocal Review: Continue exploring, studying, practicing and reinforcing the understanding of previous exercises. The integration of body, breath, sound, diction skills and their relation to the text

Introduce more complicated articulation study- consonant blends, diphthongs, stress placement (')

Apr.-Jun.

Continue intricate articulation study

Vocal distinction- Pitch, pace, flow and intensity of sentence structure and words

Use of complicated text –monologues/sonnets in applying skills

Final presentation of text – teacher evaluation/student's thoughts on the class instruction discussed

Attendance is essential because the instruction must be experienced. More than 2 days missed grades lowered according to the discretion of the teacher. Letters from guardians are required with absences.

Student's attitude, discipline and respect play a significant role in the overall grading of the student.

- Grades based on attendance, commitment, and progress - 60%
- Vocal presentations- 40%
- Grading
 - A - Superior work with supreme dedication that is evident in the work presented
 - B - Above average work, consistent aggressive effort, clear comprehension of skills, steady progress
 - C - Average completed work, expected standards
 - D - Warning of failure, unsatisfactory work
 - F - Failure to meet expectations

