

The Duke Ellington School Voice / Speech III Theatre Dept.

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 3 days missed a month 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.

Students will receive grades for the following:

1. Practice and Application 50% (warm-ups, in-class discussion, exercises, homework, attendance, focus, work-ethic, commitment, progress)
2. Assessments 40% (vocal presentations, reflective papers, exams, juries, group projects, performances)
3. Participation/Citizenship 10% (leadership within the department: behavior in hallway and class, participation in activities like theatre fund raisers and events, volunteer project, ensemble job responsibility)

- 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