

A VOICE FIT FOR TEACHING

Warm-up Workshop Notes

This is a mini warm-up workshop to help you to introduce the booklet *A Voice Fit For Teaching*.

The voice is an amazing facility but you do need to take care of it to keep it fit and healthy for many years. As a teacher you need to convey your message to large numbers of children / students, often in acoustically unfriendly spaces, so that they can hear and absorb what you are saying. You owe it to them to be clear and effective.

Key points that are included in the booklet are:

- Advice about how to take more care of your voice and recognise when it's not healthy
- the importance of the body position when talking
- the importance of correct breathing
- being aware of the effect of your voice on your listeners
- the need to impart enthusiasm through your voice for the knowledge and information you are teaching.

Like any muscle, the voice benefits from a gentle warm-up before use. Use this set of exercises to run a short warm-up session.

1. Ask everybody to stand up and place their feet slightly apart, at hip-width, so they feel well balanced.
2. Ask them to 'feel tall', as though a string was pulling up their spine from the top of their head.
3. Now do a few shoulder rolls. Lift the right shoulder up towards your ear then roll it backwards and down, then do the same with the left shoulder. Continue rolling right then left, right then left about six times.
4. Stop, relax the shoulders, 'feel tall', breathe gently.
5. Time to stretch. Lift the right arm up and gently stretch up to the ceiling. Don't arch the body. Bring the right arm down and repeat with the left side.

6. Ask everybody to make some funny faces to exercise all their facial muscles. Up and down with the forehead, then the eyebrows, squeeze and then rotate the eyes, jiggle the nose, manipulate the lips, open the mouth and use the cheeks. Then move them all together and look as daft as possible!
7. Now let's concentrate on the voice. Remind everybody that you talk as you breathe out. So ask everybody to hum any note on their next out-going breath and just stop when they need to breathe in – but it's not a competition to see who can continue the longest.
8. Now feel how the tongue, nose and lips are used in making sounds:
 - tongue – say 'la-la-la-la-la' allowing the tongue to flick rapidly up and down.
 - nose – take a deep breath and alternate between 'ing-ing-ing', 'ong-ong-ong' and 'ang-ang-ang'
 - lips – see how they help in defining different sounds. Shape them and say 'p-p-p-p-p-p', change it to 'b-b-b-b-b-b'. 'T' and 'd' use the front of the tongue and 'k' and 'g' the middle.
9. Words need to be spoken clearly to be understood, so have fun with some tongue twisters like:
 - She sells seashells by the seashore
 - Yellow lorry, red lorry
 - Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers
 - Round the ragged rock the ragged rascal ran.Can anybody suggest any more?
10. Finally discuss some basic ways to care for the voice:
 - Do staff have access to plenty of water throughout the day? Do they drink enough?
 - Are there alternatives to caffeine drinks available, (like lemon, honey, ginger, peppermint)?
 - Should microphones be available for specific sessions/rooms and do people know how to use them?
 - Does anybody have any other concerns?

Workshops on care and use of the voice are available from:

www.shakspeareservices.co.uk

or more information from:

info@shakespeare.org

Booklets available from

www.southgatepublishers.co.uk