

INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL

# Singer's Diction

A self-paced, competency-based lyric  
diction and English transcription course

Cheri Montgomery

S.T.M. Publishers  
Nashville, TN

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## PREFACE

*Singer's Diction* is an introductory workbook that provides an in-depth study of lyric diction and English transcription. Each unit contains an art song selection, transcription rules, twelve transcription exercises, and six IPA recognition exercises. The IPA recognition exercises double as an answer key for the first six lists. An answer key for the remaining lists is included in the instructor's manual. Cumulative testing of transcription rules is provided throughout the book and a comprehensive test follows the final unit. The transcribed art songs in each unit contain a frequent occurrence of the highlighted sound. QR codes give students instant access to recommended performances sung by classically trained singers. A glossary of IPA symbols provides convenient access to enunciation instructions. The IPA wheels in the back of the book help students memorize IPA symbols. A listening lab, review of rules, phonetic charts, and IPA Scramble app are available at [www.stmpublishers.com](http://www.stmpublishers.com).

The transcriptions in this text are based on rules established by Madeleine Marshall, author of *The Singer's Manual of English Diction*. Marshall hailed a dialect-free pronunciation of the English language that is best for singing.

The content and outline of this book represent experience gained from transcribing a database of more than 87,000 English words according to rules established by Marshall. The database allowed the author to search for words based on frequency of occurrence, phonetic symbol, and spelling. The database also provided a valuable tool for organizing the spellings of the English language. Rules for defining the pronunciation of schwa are included in this text. Defining the schwa is important for lyric diction since it must be sustained for singing.

The voice is a phonetic instrument. Vowels and consonants are the basic elements of language and serve as tools for vocal discovery. It is my hope that this text and workbook will help singers enjoy the lovely sounds that are uniquely designed for the human voice.

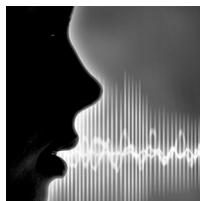
Cheri Montgomery

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Enunciation  
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## UNIT 2:

### Closed front [i] and open front [ɪ]

Frequently occurring words from lyrics

	[i]	[ɪ]	[i] & [ɪ]
1.	<b>me</b> [mi]	<b>in</b> [ɪn]	<b>sweetly</b> [ˈswi:tli]
2.	<b>be</b> [bi]	<b>is</b> [ɪz]	<b>weeping</b> [ˈwi:pɪŋ]
3.	<b>he</b> [hi]	<b>it</b> [ɪt]	<b>easy</b> [ˈi:zi]
4.	<b>see</b> [si]	<b>his</b> [hɪz]	<b>breathing</b> [ˈbri:ðɪŋ]
5.	<b>sleep</b> [slɪp]	<b>kiss</b> [kɪs]	<b>feeling</b> [ˈfi:lɪŋ]
6.	<b>leaves</b> [li:vz]	<b>if</b> [ɪf]	<b>greeting</b> [ˈgri:tɪŋ]
7.	<b>deep</b> [di:p]	<b>him</b> [hɪm]	<b>seeking</b> [ˈsi:kɪŋ]
8.	<b>feet</b> [fi:t]	<b>still</b> [stɪl]	<b>fleeting</b> [ˈfli:tɪŋ]
9.	<b>keep</b> [ki:p]	<b>did</b> [dɪd]	<b>pleasing</b> [ˈpli:zɪŋ]
10.	<b>peace</b> [pi:s]	<b>till</b> [tɪl]	<b>leafy</b> [ˈli:fi]
11.	<b>meet</b> [mi:t]	<b>ill</b> [ɪl]	<b>gleaming</b> [ˈglimɪŋ]
12.	<b>ease</b> [i:z]	<b>tis</b> [tɪz]	<b>freely</b> [ˈfri:li]

## Art song with a frequent occurrence of [i] and [ɪ]



Barbara Bonney: [https:// www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_wNC1q-DHSA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_wNC1q-DHSA)

Argento, Dominick (Am. b. 1927)  
6 Elizabethan Songs [ sɪks ,elɪzə 'biθɪn sɒnz ]



### 1. *Spring*

Nashe, Thomas (Eng. 1567 - 1601)

*Spring, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant king;*  
[ spɪŋ ðə swɪt spɪŋ ɪz ðə jɪəz 'plezə(ɪ)nt kɪŋ ]

*Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,*  
[ ðen blʌmz ɪf θɪŋ ðen meɪdz dɑns ɪn ə rɪŋ ]

*Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing,*  
[ kəʊld dɒθ nɒt stɪŋ ðə 'prɪti bɜdz du sɪŋ ]

*Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!*  
[ 'kuku dʒʌg dʒʌg pu wi tu wɪtə wu ]

*The palm and may make country houses gay,*  
[ ðə pɑm ænd meɪ meɪk 'kʌntɪ 'haʊzɪz geɪ ]

*Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day,*  
[ læmz frɪsk ænd pleɪ ðə 'ʃepədz paɪp ɔl deɪ ]

*And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay,*  
[ ænd wi heə eɪ bɜdz tjʊn ðɪs 'meɪ leɪ ]

*Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!*  
[ 'kuku dʒʌg dʒʌg pu wi tu wɪtə wu ]

*The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,*  
[ ðə fɪldz breɪð swɪt ðə 'deɪzɪz kɪs ɔʊə fi:t ]

*Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,*  
[ jʌŋ 'lʌvəz mi:t ɔʊld waɪvz ə 'sʌnɪŋ sɪt ]

*In every street these tunes our ears do greet,*  
[ ɪn 'evɪ stri:t ðɪz tjʊnz ɔʊə iəz du gre:t ]

*Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!*  
[ 'kuku dʒʌg dʒʌg pu wi tu wɪtə wu ]

*Spring! The sweet Spring!*  
[ spɪŋ ðə swɪt spɪŋ ]

## RULES FOR TRANSCRIPTION

### CLOSED FRONT [i]

*eat* [it], *breeze*, *we*, *field*, *ski*, *receive*, *people*

### OPEN FRONT [ɪ]

*give* [gɪv], *quick*, *build*, *myth*, *been*

### UNSTRESSED [ɪ]

Final *-y*, *-ie*, *-ies*, *-ied*, *-ing*:  
*mercy*, *daisies*, *pitied*, *singing*  
 ['mɜːsɪ] ['deɪzɪz] ['pɪtɪd] ['sɪŋɪŋ]

Unstressed [i] is replaced with [ɪ] for lyric diction. The quality of [i] calls undue attention to unstressed syllables. The [ɪ] replacement enhances phrasing and intelligibility.

### STRESS MARK [ ' ]

A stress mark is placed before the stressed syllable: *believe* [bɪ'liv]. The mark [ , ] is used to indicate secondary stress: *melancholy* ['mɛlɪn,kəlɪ].

**Transcription notes.** Silent vowels are not transcribed. A final *e* is often silent in English. For example, the word *love* [lʌv] is transcribed with three symbols to represent the three sounds that are actually pronounced. Sometimes a vowel cluster makes one sound: *tree* [tri]. Silent consonants are not transcribed: *could* [kʊd]. Double consonants are represented with a single symbol: *still* [stɪl]. Some consonants have phonetic changes. Pronunciation depends on the consonant's position within the word. For example, a final *s* is pronounced as a [z] when preceded by a voiced consonant: *waves* [weɪvz]. A final *d* is pronounced as a [t] when preceded by a voiceless consonant: *liked* [laɪkt]. The spelling *x* is transcribed as [ks] or [gz]. The spelling *c* is transcribed with [s] or [k]: *cent* [sent] *cook* [kʊk]. A glottal stop [ʔ] precedes initial vowel words in speech: *eyes* [ʔaɪz]. Glottal stops are not indicated in this text.



## Worksheet #2: Closed front [i] and open front [ɪ]

## #1

1. mimic \_\_\_\_\_
2. cease \_\_\_\_\_
3. stills \_\_\_\_\_
4. beets \_\_\_\_\_
5. glimpse \_\_\_\_\_
6. seek \_\_\_\_\_
7. mint \_\_\_\_\_
8. sleepy \_\_\_\_\_
9. fixed \_\_\_\_\_
10. zeal \_\_\_\_\_

## #2

1. eats \_\_\_\_\_
2. lilies \_\_\_\_\_
3. filled \_\_\_\_\_
4. sleeve \_\_\_\_\_
5. bliss \_\_\_\_\_
6. cleave \_\_\_\_\_
7. limbs \_\_\_\_\_
8. heat \_\_\_\_\_
9. split \_\_\_\_\_
10. key \_\_\_\_\_

## #3

1. flits \_\_\_\_\_
2. seen \_\_\_\_\_
3. visit \_\_\_\_\_
4. ceased \_\_\_\_\_
5. pity \_\_\_\_\_
6. six \_\_\_\_\_
7. peas \_\_\_\_\_
8. feast \_\_\_\_\_
9. hills \_\_\_\_\_
10. leaned \_\_\_\_\_

## #4

1. bids \_\_\_\_\_
2. steep \_\_\_\_\_
3. gifts \_\_\_\_\_
4. deeply \_\_\_\_\_
5. midst \_\_\_\_\_
6. leaf \_\_\_\_\_
7. sinned \_\_\_\_\_
8. eve \_\_\_\_\_
9. timid \_\_\_\_\_
10. clean \_\_\_\_\_

## #5

1. fields \_\_\_\_\_
2. lived \_\_\_\_\_
3. bleak \_\_\_\_\_
4. cities \_\_\_\_\_
5. picked \_\_\_\_\_
6. seeds \_\_\_\_\_
7. mists \_\_\_\_\_
8. scenes \_\_\_\_\_
9. skill \_\_\_\_\_
10. leagues \_\_\_\_\_

## #6

1. sits \_\_\_\_\_
2. easily \_\_\_\_\_
3. scenic \_\_\_\_\_
4. missed \_\_\_\_\_
5. bee \_\_\_\_\_
6. pick \_\_\_\_\_
7. lean \_\_\_\_\_
8. dims \_\_\_\_\_
9. hid \_\_\_\_\_
10. seize \_\_\_\_\_

## Worksheet #2: Answer key and IPA recognition exercise

## #1

1. \_\_\_\_\_ ['mɪmɪk]
2. \_\_\_\_\_ [sɪs]
3. \_\_\_\_\_ [stɪlz]
4. \_\_\_\_\_ [bɪts]
5. \_\_\_\_\_ [glɪmps]
6. \_\_\_\_\_ [sɪk]
7. \_\_\_\_\_ [mɪnt]
8. \_\_\_\_\_ ['slɪpɪ]
9. \_\_\_\_\_ [fɪkst]
10. \_\_\_\_\_ [zɪl]

## #2

1. \_\_\_\_\_ [ɪts]
2. \_\_\_\_\_ ['lɪlɪz]
3. \_\_\_\_\_ [fɪld]
4. \_\_\_\_\_ [slɪv]
5. \_\_\_\_\_ [blɪs]
6. \_\_\_\_\_ [klɪv]
7. \_\_\_\_\_ [lɪmz]
8. \_\_\_\_\_ [hɪt]
9. \_\_\_\_\_ [splɪt]
10. \_\_\_\_\_ [ki]

## #3

1. \_\_\_\_\_ [flɪts]
2. \_\_\_\_\_ [sɪn]
3. \_\_\_\_\_ ['vɪzɪt]
4. \_\_\_\_\_ [sɪst]
5. \_\_\_\_\_ ['pɪtɪ]
6. \_\_\_\_\_ [sɪks]
7. \_\_\_\_\_ [pɪz]
8. \_\_\_\_\_ [fɪst]
9. \_\_\_\_\_ [hɪlz]
10. \_\_\_\_\_ [lɪnd]

## #4

1. \_\_\_\_\_ [bɪdz]
2. \_\_\_\_\_ [stɪp]
3. \_\_\_\_\_ [gɪfts]
4. \_\_\_\_\_ ['dɪplɪ]
5. \_\_\_\_\_ [mɪdst]
6. \_\_\_\_\_ [lɪf]
7. \_\_\_\_\_ [sɪnd]
8. \_\_\_\_\_ [ɪv]
9. \_\_\_\_\_ ['tɪmɪd]
10. \_\_\_\_\_ [klɪn]

## #5

1. \_\_\_\_\_ [fɪldz]
2. \_\_\_\_\_ [lɪvd]
3. \_\_\_\_\_ [blɪk]
4. \_\_\_\_\_ ['sɪtɪz]
5. \_\_\_\_\_ [pɪkt]
6. \_\_\_\_\_ [sɪdz]
7. \_\_\_\_\_ [mɪsts]
8. \_\_\_\_\_ [sɪnz]
9. \_\_\_\_\_ [skɪl]
10. \_\_\_\_\_ [lɪgz]

## #6

1. \_\_\_\_\_ [sɪts]
2. \_\_\_\_\_ ['ɪzɪlɪ]
3. \_\_\_\_\_ ['sɪnɪk]
4. \_\_\_\_\_ [mɪst]
5. \_\_\_\_\_ [bi]
6. \_\_\_\_\_ [pɪk]
7. \_\_\_\_\_ [lɪn]
8. \_\_\_\_\_ [dɪmz]
9. \_\_\_\_\_ [hɪd]
10. \_\_\_\_\_ [sɪz]

## Worksheet #2: Closed front [i] and open front [ɪ]

## #7

1. lids \_\_\_\_\_
2. pleased \_\_\_\_\_
3. cynic \_\_\_\_\_
4. bees \_\_\_\_\_
5. cliffs \_\_\_\_\_
6. east \_\_\_\_\_
7. hint \_\_\_\_\_
8. seem \_\_\_\_\_
9. lifts \_\_\_\_\_
10. deity \_\_\_\_\_

## #8

1. been \_\_\_\_\_
2. feel \_\_\_\_\_
3. lists \_\_\_\_\_
4. deceit \_\_\_\_\_
5. fifty \_\_\_\_\_
6. meat \_\_\_\_\_
7. stick \_\_\_\_\_
8. gleams \_\_\_\_\_
9. seas \_\_\_\_\_
10. kissed \_\_\_\_\_

## #9

1. seats \_\_\_\_\_
2. mill \_\_\_\_\_
3. eaves \_\_\_\_\_
4. since \_\_\_\_\_
5. heed \_\_\_\_\_
6. mix \_\_\_\_\_
7. builds \_\_\_\_\_
8. leaps \_\_\_\_\_
9. guilty \_\_\_\_\_
10. sealed \_\_\_\_\_

## #10

1. tease \_\_\_\_\_
2. knit \_\_\_\_\_
3. scene \_\_\_\_\_
4. lily \_\_\_\_\_
5. hymns \_\_\_\_\_
6. speak \_\_\_\_\_
7. mystic \_\_\_\_\_
8. hissed \_\_\_\_\_
9. need \_\_\_\_\_
10. peaks \_\_\_\_\_

## #11

1. busy \_\_\_\_\_
2. please \_\_\_\_\_
3. tints \_\_\_\_\_
4. simplicity \_\_\_\_\_
5. beasts \_\_\_\_\_
6. slipped \_\_\_\_\_
7. meek \_\_\_\_\_
8. clicks \_\_\_\_\_
9. deeds \_\_\_\_\_
10. bid \_\_\_\_\_

## #12

1. beams \_\_\_\_\_
2. sickly \_\_\_\_\_
3. knee \_\_\_\_\_
4. lips \_\_\_\_\_
5. inn \_\_\_\_\_
6. heaped \_\_\_\_\_
7. city \_\_\_\_\_
8. seams \_\_\_\_\_
9. gild \_\_\_\_\_
10. leave \_\_\_\_\_

# GLOSSARY OF IPA SYMBOLS

## with Enunciation Instructions

Symbols	Page	Symbols	Page
[ʌ][ɑ][æ]	123	[o][ɔ]	137
[b]	124	[p]	138
[d]	125	[ɹ][ʁ]	139
[e][ɛ]	126	[r][ʀ]	140
[ə]	127	[s][z]	141
[f]	128	[ʃ][ʒ]	142
[g]	129	[t]	143
[h][ʔ]	130	[θ][ð]	144
[i][ɪ]	131	[tʃ][dʒ]	145
[j]	132	[u][ʊ]	146
[k]	133	[v]	147
[l]	134	[w][ʍ]	148
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[n][ŋ]	136	[:]	150

Review of Transcription Rules:



## Front Vowels

The term *front vowel* refers to a vowel that is formed with a forward arch of the tongue. Closed front [i] has the most forward tongue arch. The angle of the tongue for [ɪ] is similar to [i] but with a lower arch (there is more space between the tongue arch and the roof of the mouth). In speech, front vowels are enunciated by spreading the lips. The singer must learn to release the jaw and form front vowels with the tongue arch. Front vowels are also called tongue vowels.

### Closed Front [i] *tea*

**Enunciation.** Release and lower the jaw. Find the space of *ah* without spreading the lips. The tongue tip touches the lower front teeth, the front of the tongue arches *far* forward, and the sides of the tongue contact the length of the upper molars (to the eye teeth). Raise the soft palate and direct vocalized tone toward the upper front teeth.

**Warning.** Form [i] with the tongue arch (*not* by spreading the lips). Do not replace [i] with [ɪ]. Avoid the low placement of [i] in spoken English. Do not mask the brilliance of [i] by making it dark or covered. Avoid a nasalized tone. Maintain an unaltered vowel formation throughout vocalization.

**Tongue push-ups.** Release and lower the jaw. Form an [i] vowel without spreading the lips. Check for accuracy by whispering an *ich-Laut* [ç] (*humor*). Have your teacher listen to the sound to insure that it is actually an [i] vowel and not an [ɪ] sound. Release the tongue to the [a] position without altering the jaw, lip, or tongue tip position. Alternate between the two formations by means of tongue arch movement only.

### Open Front [ɪ] *give*

**Enunciation.** Release and lower the jaw. Find the space of *ah* without spreading the lips. The tongue tip touches the lower front teeth, the front of the tongue arches *far* forward, and the sides of the tongue contact the upper molars. Raise the soft palate and direct vocalized tone toward the upper front teeth.

**Warning.** Form [ɪ] with the tongue arch (*not* by spreading the lips). The [ɪ] of spoken English is low in placement. Avoid the raspy sound associated with vocal fry that is common in the American English manner of speech.

## IPA

[ʌ][a][æ]

[b]

[d]

[e][ɛ]

[ə]

[f]

[g]

[h][ʔ]

[i][ɪ]

[j]

[k]

[l]

[m]

[n][ŋ]

[o][ɔ]

[p]

[ɹ][ʁ]

[r][ʀ]

[s][z]

[ʃ][ʒ]

[t]

[ð][θ]

[tʃ][dʒ]

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