

Singer's Diction

A self-paced, competency-based English diction course

Cheri Montgomery

S.T.M. Publishers
Nashville, TN

Copyright © 2019 Cheri A. Montgomery

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. This book, or parts thereof, may not be reproduced in any form by any means without the written permission of the publisher. The scanning, uploading, photocopying and distribution of this book via the internet or by any other means is illegal and punishable by law. Your support of the author's rights is appreciated.

Copies of this book may be ordered by contacting:

S.T.M. Publishers
 P.O. Box 111485
 Nashville, TN 37222
 Tel: (615) 831-9859 Fax: (615) 831-7148
 Email: info@studenttextmfg.com
 Website: www.stmpublishers.com
 Facebook: *Lyric Diction Workbook Series*

Singer's Diction, spiral bound, ISBN 978-1-7338631-0-0

Resources for voice and diction from S.T.M. Publishers:

ISBN 978-0-9975578-8-6	The Singer's Daily Practice Journal, volume I
ISBN 978-0-9975578-7-9	The Singer's Daily Practice Journal, volume II
ISBN 978-0-9894385-5-1	IPA Handbook for Singers
ISBN 978-0-9975578-3-1	Phonetic Readings for Lyric Diction, 3 rd edition
ISBN 978-0-9975578-0-0	Phonetic Transcription for Lyric Diction
ISBN 978-0-9975578-5-5	Phonetic Transcription for Lyric Diction, exp.
ISBN 978-0-9776455-0-3	English Lyric Diction Workbook, 3 rd edition
ISBN 978-0-9818829-8-7	Italian Lyric Diction Workbook, 3 rd edition
ISBN 978-0-9916559-2-2	Latin Lyric Diction Workbook
ISBN 978-0-9818829-6-3	German Lyric Diction Workbook, 5 th edition
ISBN 978-0-9916559-1-5	French Lyric Diction Workbook, 4 th edition
ISBN 978-0-9916559-5-3	Advanced French Lyric Diction Workbook

The laser IPA font used to print this work is available from Linguist's Software, Inc., P.O. Box 580, Edmonds, WA 98020-0580 USA tel (425) 775-1130 www.linguistsoftware.com.

Technical Support: Verlan Kliewer

Preface

Singer's Diction is intended for voice students with no previous exposure to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). It functions in the classroom or studio as a self-paced, competency-based English lyric diction course. An answer key for each worksheet is provided on the facing page. The glossary of IPA symbols gives students convenient access to enunciation instructions and summary of transcription rules. IPA wheels in the back of the book help students memorize the symbols. A listening lab, free IPA app, and phonetic charts are available at 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 ideal for lyric diction. The transcribed art songs included in this text verify a lyric pronunciation of the English language. Listening examples with QR codes give the reader instant access to recommended performances sung by classically trained singers.

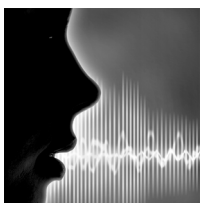
The content and outline of this book represent experience gained from transcribing a database of more than 87,000 English words according to rules established by Marshall. The database allowed the author to search for words based on frequency of occurrence, phonetic symbol, and spelling. The database 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 the schwa must be sustained for singing.

The voice is a phonetic instrument. Vowels and consonants are the basic elements of language. 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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Topics</u>	<u>Page</u>
Introduction	
Unit 1: Pronunciation guide	1
Articulatory Phonetics	5
Front Vowels	
Unit 2: Closed front [i], open front [ɪ], semi-open front [ɨ]	13
Unit 3: Closed front [e] and open front [ɛ]	19
Back Vowels	
Unit 4: Closed back [u] and open back [ʊ]	25
Unit 5: Closed back [o] and open back [ɔ]	31
Central Vowels	
Unit 6: Central [ʌ], [ɑ], and [æ]	37
Semiconsonants	
Unit 7: Palatal glide [j] and bilabial glide [w]	43
Diphthongs	
Unit 8: [ɛ:ɪ], [ɑ:ɪ], [ɔ:ɪ], [ɑ:ʊ], [o:ʊ]	49
Consonants	
Unit 9: Alveolar retroflex [ɻ] and silent <i>r</i>	55
Unit 10: Flipped [ɾ] and vowel [ɜ]	61
Unit 11: Voiceless dental fricative [θ] and voiced [ð]	67
Unit 12: Voiceless prepalatal fricative [ç] and voiced [ʒ]	73
Unit 13: Voiceless prepalatal affricate [tʃ] and voiced [dʒ]	79
Unit 14: Velar nasal [ŋ], bilabial fricative [ɱ]	85
Vowel Replacement of <i>r</i>	
Unit 15: [ɪ:ʌ], [ɛ:ʌ], [ɔ:ʌ], [ʊ:ʌ], [ɑ:ɪʌ], [ɑ:ʊʌ]	91
Transcription of Unstressed Syllables	
Unit 16: Front vowels	97
Unit 17: Central vowels	103
Unit 18: Back vowels	109
Transcription of Prefixes	
Unit 19: Open front [ɪ], central [ʌ], [ɜ], back [ʊ], [ɔ]	115
Glossary of IPA symbols	121
Bibliography	151
IPA wheels	152



Enunciation
Page 131

UNIT 2:

Closed front [i], open front [ɪ], and semi-open front [ɪ]

Frequently occurring words from lyrics

	[i]	[ɪ]	[ɪ]
1.	me [mi]	in [ɪn]	sweetly ['swi:tɪ]
2.	be [bi]	is [ɪz]	weeping ['wi:pɪŋ]
3.	he [hi]	it [ɪt]	easy ['i:zɪ]
4.	see [si]	his [hɪz]	breathing ['bri:ðɪŋ]
5.	sleep [slɪp]	kiss [kɪs]	feeling ['fi:lɪŋ]
6.	leaves [li:vz]	if [ɪf]	greeting ['gri:tɪŋ]
7.	deep [di:p]	him [hɪm]	seeking ['si:kɪŋ]
8.	feet [fi:t]	still [stɪl]	fleeting ['fli:tɪŋ]
9.	keep [ki:p]	did [dɪd]	pleasing ['pli:zɪŋ]
10.	peace [pi:s]	till [tɪl]	leafy ['li:fɪ]
11.	meet [mi:t]	ill [ɪl]	gleaming ['glimɪŋ]
12.	ease [i:z]	tis [tɪz]	freely ['fri:lɪ]

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



Barbara Bonney: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uk8w5z-P5ZY>

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



1. Spring

Nashe, Thomas (Eng. 1567 - 1601)

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

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

Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing,
[koʊld dʌθ nɒt stɪŋ ðə ˈprɪtɪ bɜdz du sɪŋ]

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

The palm and may make country houses gay,
[ðə pɑm ænd meɪ meɪk ˈkʌntɪ ˈhɑʊzɪz geɪ]

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

And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay,
[ænd wi hiːə eɪ bɜdz tjun ðɪs ˈmɛrɪ leɪ]

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

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,
[ðə fɪldz brið swɪt ðə ˈdeɪzɪz kɪs ɑːʊə fi:t]

Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,
[jʌŋ ˈlʌvəz mi:t ɔːld wɪvz əˈsʌnɪŋ sɪt]

In every street these tunes our ears do greet,
[ɪn ˈevrɪ stri:t ðɪz tjunz ɑːʊə ɪːz du gri:t]

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

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

RULES FOR TRANSCRIPTION

CLOSED FRONT [ɪ]

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

OPEN FRONT [ɪ]

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

SEMI-OPEN FRONT [ɪ̞]

Final *-y*, *-ie*, *-ies*, *-ied*, *-ing*:

mercy, *daisies*, *pitied*, *singing*

[ˈmɜːsɪ̞] [ˈdeɪzɪ̞z] [ˈpɪtɪ̞d] [ˈsɪŋɪ̞ŋ]

The quality of [ɪ̞] calls undue attention to unstressed syllables. In the interest of shaping the phrase, [ɪ] in final unstressed syllables is altered to [ɪ̞] for lyric diction: *evening* [ˈivnɪ̞ŋ]. Semi-open [ɪ̞] is a sound between [ɪ] and [ɪ̞].

STRESS MARK [ˈ]

A stress mark is placed before the stressed syllable: *believe* [bɪˈlɪv]. A [ˌ] symbol indicates secondary stress: *universe* [ˌjʊnɪˌvɜːs]. A word may possess equal stress on two syllables: *etude* [ˈeˈtʃud].

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], open front [ɪ], semi-open front [ɛ]

#1		#2	
1. been	_____	1. limbs	_____
2. fixed	_____	2. seen	_____
3. clean	_____	3. cease	_____
4. speak	_____	4. timid	_____
5. hills	_____	5. fields	_____
6. seem	_____	6. knee	_____
7. bid	_____	7. slipped	_____
8. deeply	_____	8. lips	_____
9. since	_____	9. sleepy	_____
10. leave	_____	10. lived	_____
#3		#4	
1. cities	_____	1. mill	_____
2. please	_____	2. eve	_____
3. hid	_____	3. feel	_____
4. seek	_____	4. stills	_____
5. gleams	_____	5. leaf	_____
6. mists	_____	6. missed	_____
7. seas	_____	7. lilies	_____
8. picked	_____	8. gifts	_____
9. bids	_____	9. filled	_____
10. inn	_____	10. deeds	_____
#5		#6	
1. knit	_____	1. mystic	_____
2. hymns	_____	2. heat	_____
3. mimic	_____	3. seize	_____
4. skill	_____	4. bee	_____
5. need	_____	5. gild	_____
6. pity	_____	6. hissed	_____
7. scene	_____	7. easily	_____
8. east	_____	8. glimpse	_____
9. leagues	_____	9. key	_____
10. six	_____	10. builds	_____

Answer Key #2: Closed front [i], open front [ɪ], semi-open front [ɪ̞]

#1

1. been [biːn]
2. fixed [fɪkst]
3. clean [kliːn]
4. speak [spiːk]
5. hills [hɪlz]
6. seem [siːm]
7. bid [bɪd]
8. deeply [ˈdiːplɪ̞]
9. since [sɪns]
10. leave [liːv]

#3

1. cities [ˈsɪtɪ̞z]
2. please [pliːz]
3. hid [hɪd]
4. seek [siːk]
5. gleams [ɡliːmz]
6. mists [mɪsts]
7. seas [siːz]
8. picked [pɪkt]
9. bids [bɪdz]
10. inn [ɪn]

#5

1. knit [nɪt]
2. hymns [hɪmz]
3. mimic [ˈmɪmɪk]
4. skill [skɪl]
5. need [niːd]
6. pity [pɪtɪ̞]
7. scene [siːn]
8. east [iːst]
9. leagues [liːgz]
10. six [sɪks]

#2

1. limbs [lɪmz]
2. seen [siːn]
3. cease [siːs]
4. timid [ˈtɪmɪd]
5. fields [fiːldz]
6. knee [niː]
7. slipped [slɪpt]
8. lips [lɪps]
9. sleepy [ˈslɪpɪ̞]
10. lived [lɪvd]

#4

1. mill [mɪl]
2. eve [iːv]
3. feel [fiːl]
4. stills [stɪlz]
5. leaf [liːf]
6. missed [mɪst]
7. lilies [ˈlɪliːz]
8. gifts [ɡɪfts]
9. filled [fiːld]
10. deeds [diːdz]

#6

1. mystic [ˈmɪstɪk]
2. heat [hiːt]
3. seize [siːz]
4. bee [biː]
5. gild [ɡɪld]
6. hissed [hɪst]
7. easily [ˈiːzɪlɪ̞]
8. glimpse [ɡlɪmps]
9. key [kiː]
10. builds [bɪldz]

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). The arch is minutely less fronted for the [e]. The angle of the tongue for [ɛ] is similar to [e] 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: The jaw is released. 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. Form [i] with the tongue arch (*not* by spreading the lips).

Warning: Do not replace [i] with [ɪ]. Avoid the medial placement of [i] in spoken English. Do not mask the brilliance of [i] by making it dark or covered. Avoid a nasalized tone.

Open Front [ɪ] *give*

Enunciation: The jaw is released. The tongue tip touches the lower front teeth, the front of the tongue arches forward, and the sides of the tongue contact the upper molars. Raise the soft palate and direct vocalized tone toward the upper front teeth. Form [ɪ] with the tongue arch (*not* by spreading the lips).

Warning: The [ɪ] of spoken English is medial in placement. Avoid the raspy sound associated with vocal fry that is common in the American English manner of speech.

Semi-open Front [ɨ]: *dreaming*

Description: Semi-open front [ɨ] is a sound that is between [i] and [ɪ].

IPA

[a][ʌ][æ]

[b]

[d]

[e][ɛ]

[ə]

[f]

[g]

[h][ʔ]

[i][ɪ]

[j]

[k]

[l]

[m]

[n][ŋ]

[o][ɔ]

[p]

[ɹ][ɜ]

[r][ɻ]

[s][z]

[ʃ][ʒ]

[t]

[ð][θ]

[tʃ][dʒ]

[u][ʊ]

[v]

[w][ʍ]

Diph.

[:]

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Blades-Zeller, Elizabeth. *A Spectrum of Voices*. Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, 2003.

Grubb, Thomas. *Singing in French*. New York: Schirmer Books, 1979.

Marshall, Madeleine. *The Singer's Manual of English Diction*. G. Schirmer, Inc., New York 1953.

PONS Online Dictionary. PONS. N.P, n.d. Web. 09 Dec. 2017.
<<http://www.pons.eu/>>.

Ross, WM. T. *Voice Culture and Elocution* The Baker & Taylor Co., New York 1890.