

# The Singer's Daily Practice Journal

Volume I: A graded introduction  
to vocal technique and diction

Cheri Montgomery

S.T.M. Publishers  
Nashville, TN

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## Preface

Students would benefit from daily lessons in the first year of study. There are many skills to be acquired at once and much of the information must be tailored to match the student's unique ability. This planner provides general information about the singing process and includes daily written assignments. The goal is to keep the singer thinking about their lessons throughout the week and to give the instructor an additional way of assessing the student's level of commitment. A sample voice syllabus and gradebook are available on the instructor's page at [www.stmpublishers.com](http://www.stmpublishers.com).

The *International Phonetic Alphabet* (IPA) gives the teacher a means of communicating precise sounds for vocal exercises and literature assignments. The vocal apparatus is uniquely structured for language. The sounds of language are uniquely suited for the vocal instrument. Consonants and vowels help us understand the function of the voice. They are useful for training, building, and refining the voice. Vocal concepts in this text are discussed using the IPA. The symbols selected represent an elegant manner of pronunciation as recommended by Madeleine Marshall, author of *The Singer's Manual of English Diction*. Space is provided beneath the IPA for students to supply the English translation. This approach gives students the opportunity to hear proper English and to complete a daily written assignment. An answer key is included and can be used to flip the daily exercise into a vowel transcription test.

Both volumes in this series combine textbook, workbook, and journal in one resource for voice students. The exercises, written in the treble clef, are to be transposed an octave lower for the male voice. Each section of the 15-week journal begins with manuscript paper for recording weekly lesson notes, exercises, and assignments. A check-list of vocal concepts is included. This gives the teacher the ability to direct students to the precise concept (with lesson and page number) that requires attention for the week. The following page provides space for the student to record progress and log daily practice times.

*Preface (continued)*

*The Singers Daily Practice Journal* prepares the student for English, Italian, German, French, and Latin repertoire assignments by providing a graded introduction to phonetic transcription, phonetic reading, and classical singing technique.

An abbreviated version of the pedagogy within this text is published in the *Journal of Singing*, Jan./Feb. 2018 issue: *The Voice and Diction Connection, A Diction Instructor's Approach to Voice Pedagogy* by Cheri Montgomery.

CM

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## *English Transcription: Week 1*

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Day 2: English Front Vowels

Day 3: English Back Vowels

Day 4: English Central Vowels

Day 5: English Consonants – Fricatives

Day 6: English Consonants – Affricates,  
[j] Glide, and Nasal [ŋ]



Lesson Notes, Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Checklist of Concepts to Review

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## Daily Notes and Practice Times

Day 1

Practice Time: \_\_\_\_\_

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Day 2

Practice Time: \_\_\_\_\_

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Day 3

Practice Time: \_\_\_\_\_

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Day 4

Practice Time: \_\_\_\_\_

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Day 5

Practice Time: \_\_\_\_\_

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Day 6

Practice Time: \_\_\_\_\_

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## The International Phonetic Alphabet

The IPA was established by the International Phonetic Association around 1888. Each symbol stands for one sound. Brackets enclose the symbols of a word or phrase. Precise pronunciation of each symbol must be defined within the respective language. Vowel and consonant terms are defined on pages 152 and 153.

### English Transcription

Silent vowels are not transcribed. A final *e* is often silent in English. For example, the four-letter word *love* [lʌv] is transcribed with three symbols to represent the three sounds that are actually pronounced. Single vowels may have more than one sound. The *i* of *like* [la:ɪk] is transcribed with two symbols to represent the two sounds pronounced. Sometimes a vowel cluster makes one sound as in the word *tree* [tri]. Silent consonants are not transcribed. The *l* of *could* [kʊd] is silent. Double consonants are represented with a single symbol as in the word *call* [kɔl]. Some consonants have phonetic changes. Pronunciation depends on the consonant's position within the word. For example, a final *s* is [z] when preceded by a voiced consonant: *waves* [we:ɪvz]. A final *d* is [t] when preceded by a voiceless consonant: *looked* [lʊkt].

Here is a list of IPA symbols with common English spellings:

[ɑ]: <i>a, o</i>	[h]: <i>h</i>	[o]: <i>o</i>	[u]: <i>oo, ou, u, ew</i>
[æ]: <i>a</i>	[i]: <i>ee, ea, ie</i>	[ɔ]: <i>al, aw, or, au, ou</i>	[ʊ]: <i>oo, ou, u</i>
[b]: <i>b</i>	[ɪ]: <i>i, ie, ui, y</i>	[p]: <i>p</i>	[ʌ]: <i>o, u, ou</i>
[d]: <i>d, t</i>	[j]: <i>y</i>	[ɹ] and [r]: <i>r</i>	[v]: <i>v</i>
[ɛ]: <i>e, ea, ie, ai</i>	[k]: <i>c, ck, qu</i>	[s]: <i>c, s</i>	[w]: <i>w</i>
[ɜ]: vowel + <i>r</i>	[ks]: <i>x</i>	[ʃ]: <i>sh, ch</i>	[ʌ]: <i>wh</i>
[f]: <i>f, ph, gh</i>	[l]: <i>l</i>	[t]: <i>t</i>	[z]: <i>z, s</i>
[g]: <i>g</i>	[m]: <i>m</i>	[tʃ]: <i>ch</i>	[ʒ]: <i>z, s</i>
[dʒ]: <i>g, j</i>	[n]: <i>n</i>	[ð]: <i>th</i>	[ˈ]: stress mark
[gz]: <i>x</i>	[ŋ]: <i>ng, nk</i>	[θ]: <i>th</i>	[ː]: long mark

The schwa [ə] stands for an undefined sound in an unstressed syllable. It has many sounds in English. Pronunciation is based on spelling and duration of the note. For example, the *e* of *golden* is pronounced as an [ɪ] sound when set on a short note. It is [ɛ] when set on a sustained tone. The pronunciation of vowels in unstressed syllables is defined in this text according to the sustained pronunciation. Note: The sound of unstressed [æ] is often mixed with [ɪ] or [ʌ]: *fountain* [ˈfa:ʊntæn].

*English Front Vowels*

IPA	English	Transcription	Rules
[i]	sea	[si]	<i>e, ee, ea, ie, eo</i> spellings
[ɪ]	fit	[fɪt]	<i>i, ie, ui, y</i> spellings
[ɛ]	bells	[bɛlz]	<i>e, ea, ie, ai</i> spellings
[ɛ]	scent	[sɛnt]	<i>c + front vowel</i>
[ɛ]	clear	[klɪ:ə]	<i>c + back vowel or consonant</i>

Provide IPA:

- |             |        |        |         |
|-------------|--------|--------|---------|
| 1. keys     | twelve | picked | weeps   |
| 2. fence    | kissed | speaks | quick   |
| 3. minced   | peaks  | elms   | knees   |
| 4. cleansed | fixed  | queen  | guessed |
| 5. limbs    | dwells | his    | zeal    |
| 6. helped   | gives  | ceased | debts   |

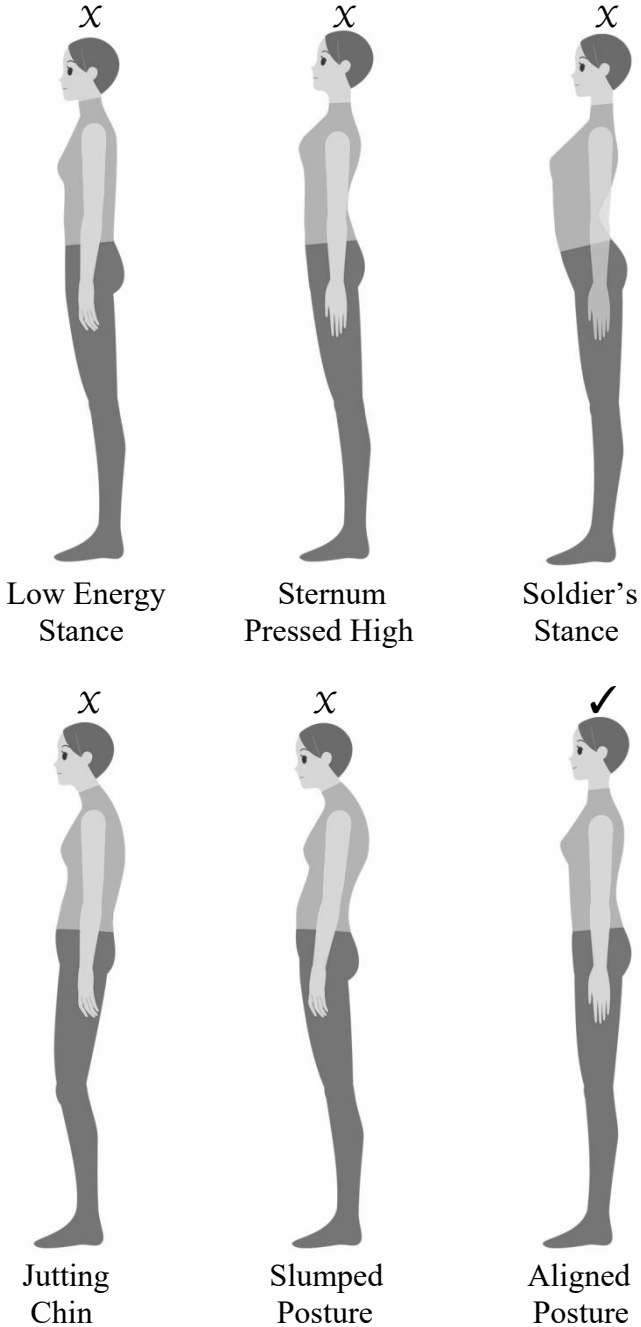
Provide English Spelling:

- |           |         |         |        |
|-----------|---------|---------|--------|
| 1. [ɛls]  | [pɪs]   | [bɪlt]  | [hɛns] |
| 2. [sɪnz] | [nekst] | [ɪst]   | [klɪk] |
| 3. [hɪmz] | [sɪns]  | [kwɛst] | [gɪs]  |

Answer Key:

- |             |         |         |        |
|-------------|---------|---------|--------|
| 1. [kɪz]    | [twelv] | [pɪkt]  | [wɪps] |
| 2. [fɛns]   | [kɪst]  | [spɪks] | [kwɪk] |
| 3. [mɪnst]  | [pɪks]  | [ɛlmz]  | [ni:z] |
| 4. [klenzd] | [fɪkst] | [kwɪn]  | [gest] |
| 5. [lɪmz]   | [dwɛlz] | [hɪz]   | [zɪl]  |
| 6. [hɛlpt]  | [gɪvz]  | [sɪst]  | [dɛts] |
| 1. else     | peace   | built   | hence  |
| 2. scenes   | next    | east    | click  |
| 3. hymns    | since   | quest   | geese  |

# Correct vs Incorrect Postural Alignment



## *Postural Alignment: Week 3*

Day 1: Exploring Upright, Expansive Posture

Day 2: Imagery

Day 3: Releasing Interfering Muscular Tension

Day 4: Diction Diagnostic

Day 5: Low Expansion for the Breath

Day 6: Efficient Use of the Air

### *Exploring Upright, Expansive Posture*

There are seven attributes of good posture (see image on page 20):

1. The spine is elongated
2. The skull is balanced on the spine
3. The feet feel rooted
4. The body is balanced and aligned
5. The rib cage feels open and expanded
6. The stance is buoyant and elastic
7. The posture maintains a noble stance

### *The Rag Doll Stretch Exercise ~ Clifton Ware*

Multiple concepts are incorporated in one simple assignment:

1. Bend at the waist and swing the arms
2. Notice the fall-away feeling in the shoulders
3. Stretch the arms upward toward the ceiling
4. Maintain the position of the sternum
5. Place a finger on the sternum then release and lower the arms
6. Replicate the fall-away feeling in the shoulders, neck, and jaw

*Exploring Upright, Expansive Posture*

[ ðe:ʌr ə 'seven 'æʊbjʊts əv gʊd 'pɑ:ʃʊ (si 'imædʒ ən pe:ɪdʒ 'twenti) ]:

1. [ ðʌ spɑ:ɪn ɪz ɪ 'lɑŋʤe:ɪtəd ]
2. [ ðʌ skʌl ɪz 'bælənst ən ðʌ spɑ:ɪn ]
3. [ ðʌ fɪt fɪl 'rʊtəd ]
4. [ ðʌ 'bɑ:ɪ ɪz 'bælənst ænd ʌ 'lɑ:ɪnd ]
5. [ ðʌ ɪb ke:ɪdʒ fɪlz 'o:ʊpən ænd ɪk 'spændəd ]
6. [ ðʌ stɑns ɪz 'bɔ:ɪənt ænd ɪ 'læstɪk ]
7. [ ðʌ 'pɑ:ʃʊ me:ɪn'te:ɪnz ʌ 'no:ʊbəl stɑns ]

*The Rag Doll Stretch Exercise ~ Clifton Ware*

[ 'mʌltɪpəl 'kɑnsɛpts ɑr ɪn 'kɒpɔre:ɪtəd ɪn wʌn 'sɪmpəl ʌ 'sɑ:ɪnmɛnt ]:

1. [ bænd æt ðʌ we:ɪst ænd swɪŋ ði əmz ]
2. [ 'no:ʊtɪs ðʌ 'fɔlʌwe:ɪ'fɪlɪŋ ɪn ðʌ 'ʃo:ʊldəz ]
3. [ stɪɛf ði əmz 'ʌp wəd twəd ðʌ 'sɪlɪŋ ]
4. [ me:ɪn'te:ɪn ðʌ pɔ'zɪʃən əv ðʌ 'stɜnəm ]
5. [ ple:ɪs ʌ 'fɪŋʌr ən ðʌ 'stɜnəm ðen ɪɪ'lis ænd 'lo:ʊl ði əmz ]
6. [ 'ɪɛplɪke:ɪt ðʌ 'fɔlʌwe:ɪ'fɪlɪŋ ɪn ðʌ 'ʃo:ʊldəz nek ænd dʒɔ ]



### *The Tree Image*

This exercise from a ballet class compares posture with tree growth:

1. Take off your shoes so that your feet can feel the floor
2. The feet are slightly apart with the dominant foot forward
3. Imagine your toes are roots growing into the ground
4. The sternum and head are branches growing toward the sun
5. Release your head from the spine as if it were a top branch
6. The crown of your head (ponytail) is the tallest limb

### *The Diver Image ~ William McIver*

Mimic the buoyant stance of a diver at the edge of a diving board.<sup>1</sup>

Find a balanced and energized pose that is ready for activity.

### *Warnings*

Avoid a stiff stance and do not stand with the feet close together.

A slumped posture is not prepared for the demands of singing.

The chin should not jut forward nor be tucked in.

Do not raise the shoulders nor press the chest high.

See examples of incorrect posture on page 20.

---

<sup>1</sup> Elizabeth Blades-Zeller, *A Spectrum of Voices* (Scarecrow Press, Inc., Lanham, Maryland 2002), p. 7.

*The Tree Image*

[ ðɪs 'ɛksʌsɑ:ɪz flɪʌm ʌ bæ'le:ɪ klas kʌm'pe:ʌz 'pʌstʃʊ wɪð tʊi ɡɪo:ʊθ ]:

1. [ te:ɪk əf ʤɔ:ʌ ʃʊz so:ʊ ðæt ʤɔ:ʌ fɪt kæn fl ðʌ flɔ:ʌ ]
2. [ ðʌ fɪt ə 'slɑ:ɪtli ʌ 'pʌt wɪð ðʌ 'dʌmɪnənt fʊt 'fɔwʊd ]
3. [ ɪ'mædʒɪn ʤɔ:ʌ to:ʊz ə rʌts ɡɪo:ʊɪŋ 'ɪntʊ ðʌ ɡɪɑ:ʊnd ]
4. [ ðʌ 'stɜ:nʌm ænd hed ə 'bɪʌntʃɛz ɡɪo:ʊɪŋ twɔd ðʌ sʌn ]
5. [ ɪ'lɪs ʤɔ:ʌ hed flɪʌm ðʌ spɑ:ɪn æz ɪf ɪt wɜr ʌ tʌp bɪʌntʃ ]
6. [ ðʌ kɪɑ:ʊn əv ʤɔ:ʌ hed ('pɔ:ʊnɪte:ɪl) ɪz ðʌ 'tɔləst lɪm ]

*The Diver Image ~ William McIver*

[ 'mɪmɪk ðʌ 'bɔ:ɪənt stʌns əv ʌ 'dɑ:ɪvɪɹ æt ðɪ ɛdʒ əv ʌ 'dɑ:ɪvɪŋ bɔd ]

[ fɑ:ɪnd ʌ 'bælənst ænd 'ɛnʌdʒɑ:ɪzd pɔ:ʊz ðæt ɪz 'ɪɛdɪ fɔr æk'tɪvɪtɪ ]

*Warnings*

[ ʌ 'vɔ:ɪd ʌ stɪf stʌns ænd du nʌt stænd wɪð ðʌ fɪt klo:ʊs tʊ'ɡeðʌ ]

[ ʌ slʌmpt 'pʌstʃʊr ɪz nʌt pɪɪ'pe:ʌd fɔ ðʌ dɪ'mʌndz əv 'sɪŋɪŋ ]

[ ðʌ ʃɪn ʃʊd nʌt dʒʌt 'fɔwʊd nɔ bi tʌkt ɪn ]

[ du nʌt ɪɛ:ɪz ðʌ 'ʃo:ʊldʌz nɔ pɪɛs ðʌ ʃɛst hɑ:ɪ ]

[ sɪ ɪɡ'zʌmpʊlz əv ɪnkɔ'rekt pʌstʃʊr ʌn pe:ɪdʒ 'twenti ]

### *Releasing Interfering Muscular Tension*

There are eight areas of the body prone to unnecessary tension:

- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Jaw       | 5. Lips      |
| 2. Neck      | 6. Cheeks    |
| 3. Tongue    | 7. Eye brows |
| 4. Shoulders | 8. Underarms |

Tension results in muscle rigidity that can be felt and seen.

Singers must learn to identify and release interfering muscular tension.

Tension is released through movement, touch, or distraction:

1. A muscle in motion cannot cramp to the point of being rigid<sup>2</sup>
2. Touch interrupts the nerve impulses that result in negative tension
3. Replace negative muscle activity with an opposing movement

### *Muscle Awareness Exercise*

Practice the “Rag Doll Stretch” exercise in front of a mirror (page 24).

Replicate the fall-away feeling in the eight areas listed above.

The eight areas are appendages that hang off an aligned central core.

Enhance the feel of release by repeating the following Quaker phrase:

“Peace at the center” (concept by Hellen Swank)

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<sup>2</sup> Blades-Zeller, p. 78

*Releasing Interfering Muscular Tension*

[ ðe:ʌf ə e:ɪt 'e:ʌfɪʌz ʌv ðʌ 'bɑdɪ pɪo:ʊn tu ʌ 'nesɪseɪt 'tɛnʃʌn ]:

1. [ dʒɔ ]

5. [ lɪps ]

2. [ nek ]

6. [ fɪks ]

3. [ tʌŋ ]

7. [ a:ɪ bɪɑ:ʊz ]

4. [ 'fɔ:ʊldʌz ]

8. [ 'ʌndʌmz ]

[ 'tɛnʃʌn ɪ'zʌlts ɪn 'mʌsəl ɪ'dʒɪdɪtɪ ðæt kæn bɪ fɛlt ænd sɪn ]

[ 'sɪŋʌz mʌst a:ɪ'dentɪfɑ:ɪ ænd ɪ'lɪs ,ɪntʌ'fɪ:ʌfɪŋ 'mʌskjʊlʌ 'tɛnʃʌn ]

[ 'tɛnʃʌn ɪz ɪ'lɪst θru 'mʊvmənt tʌf ə dɪs'trækʃʌn ]:

1. [ ʌ 'mʌsəl ɪn 'mo:ʊʃʌn kæ'nʌt kɪæmp tu ðʌ pɔ:ɪnt ʌv 'bɪŋ 'ɪdʒɪd ]

2. [ tʌf ɪntʌ'fʌpts ðʌ nɜv 'ɪmpʌlsez ðæt ɪ'zʌlɪt ɪn 'nɛgʌtɪv 'tɛnʃʌn ]

3. [ ɪ'plɛ:ɪs 'nɛgʌtɪv 'mʌsəl æk'tɪvɪtɪ wɪð æn ʌ'pɔ:ʊzɪŋ 'mʊvmənt ]

*Muscle Awareness Exercise*

[ 'pɪæktɪs ðʌ ɪæg dʌl stɪɛf 'eksʌsɑ:ɪz ɪn fɪʌnt ʌv ʌ 'mɪrɔ (pɛ:ɪdʒ 24) ]

[ 'ɪɛplɪke:ɪt ðʌ 'fɔlʌwe:ɪ fɪlɪŋ ɪn ðɪ e:ɪt 'e:ʌfɪʌz 'lɪstɛd ʌ'bʌv ]

[ ðɪ e:ɪt 'e:ʌfɪʌz ʌf ʌ'pɛndædʒɛz ðæt hæŋ ʌf æn ʌ'la:ɪnd 'sɛntɪʊl kɔ:ʌ ]

[ ɪn'hʌns ðʌ fɪl ʌv ɪ'lɪs bɑ:ɪ rɪ'pɪtɪŋ ðʌ 'fʌlo:ʊŋ 'kwɛ:ɪkl fɪe:ɪz ]:

[ pɪs æt ðʌ 'sɛntʌ ]



*Diction Diagnostic*

[ ʌb'zɜv ðʌ 'kantækt bɪ'twɪn ði a'tɪkjule:ɪtəz tu 'mɑnɪʌ 'tɛnʃʌn ]:

1. [ fəm [b] wɪð 'ta:ɪtlɪ pɪɛst lɪps ]
2. [ tʌʃ ðʌ sɑ:ɪdz ʌv ðʌ θrə:ət bɪ'niθ ðʌ ʃɪn ]
3. [ fil hɑ:ʊ ðʌ nek 'mʌsʊlz 'ta:ɪten ɪn ɪ'spɑns ]
4. [ sʌ'stɛ:ɪn ʌ [m] wɪð ðʌ lɪps 'be:ʌlɪ 'tʌʃɪŋ ]
5. [ ðʌ lɪps 'tɪŋgʊl mɛn lɑ:ɪt 'kantækt ɪz ʌ'ʃɪvd (sɪ pɛ:ɪdʒ 36) ]

[ lɑ:ɪt 'kantækt 'ɛnʌdʒɑ:ɪzɛz ðʌ 'dɪkʃʌn ænd ɪn'hɑnzez flɛksɪ'bɪlɪtɪ ]

*There is “tension” required for singing, but that tension should be as low in the body and as far away from the area of the throat, jaw, and tongue as possible. Lindsey Christiansen*

[ 'tɛnʃʌn æt ðʌ tʌŋ be:ɪs ɪz ɪ'lɪst wɪð tʌŋ ʌʃ 'ɛksʌsɑ:ɪzɛz ]:

[ ŋa ŋa ŋa ŋa ŋa ]

Maintain the space of [a] throughout the exercise. See page 92 for a description of central [a].

[ 'ɔltʌne:ɪt bɪ'twɪn bɑ:ɪ'lɛ:ɪbɪʊlz ænd 'dentʊlz tu rɪ'lɪs ðʌ lɪp ænd tʌŋ ]:

[ la be da me ni po tu la be ] ~ *Barbara Honn*

*Let the articulators articulate and not support. One of the major problems for both diction and fine singing is that the articulators often try to be the supporters. Lindsey Christiansen*

### *Low Expansion for the Breath*

The breath expansion for singing is lower than that of speech.

The singer's expansion occurs below the waist and around the body.

It may feel awkward but not strenuous to expand the lower abdomen.

### *Experiencing a Low Expansion for the Breath*

1. Sit with elbows on the knees and chin in the palms
2. Inhale and feel expansion in the lower back region
3. Lay with your upper back and shoulders flat on the floor
4. Place a book on your stomach below the belly button
5. Inhale and observe the expansion in the lower abdomen
6. Stand and replicate the posture of number three above
7. Inhale a [w] on seven counts with expansion below the waist
8. Form a [s] without pressing the articulators
9. Expel all the air articulating the [s] on seven counts
10. Maintain a consistent flow of aspirated sound

### *Additional Goals*

Inhale a suitable amount of air to meet the demands of the phrase.

The diaphragm moves while the ribs and sternum stay calm and released.

*Low Expansion for the Breath*

[ ðʌ bɪəθ ɪk'spænjʌn fə 'sɪŋɪŋ ɪz 'lɔ:ʊʌ ðæn ðæt əv spɪf ]

[ ðʌ 'sɪŋʌz ɪk'spænjʌn ʌ 'kɜ:z bɪ'lo:ʊ ðʌ we:ɪst ænd ʌ 'rɑ:ʊnd ðʌ 'bɑ:dɪ ]

[ ɪt me:ɪ fɪl 'ɔkwɒd bʌt nɑt 'sti:ŋju:əs tu ɪk'spænd ðʌ 'lɔ:ʊʌ 'æbdomen ]

*Experiencing a Low Expansion for the Breath*

1. [ sɪt wɪð 'elbo:ʊz ən ðʌ nɪz ænd ʃɪn ɪn ðʌ pɑ:mz ]

2. [ ɪn'hɛ:ɪl ænd fɪl ɪk'spænjʌn ɪn ðʌ 'lɔ:ʊʌ bæk 'ɪdʒʌn ]

3. [ lɛ:ɪ wɪð jɔ:ʌ 'ʌpʌ bæk ænd 'ʃo:ʊldʌz flæt ən ðʌ flɔ:ʌ ]

4. [ plɛ:ɪs ʌ bʊk ən jɔ:ʌ 'stʌmæk bɪ'lo:ʊ ðʌ 'bɛɪ 'bʌtʌn ]

5. [ ɪn'hɛ:ɪl ænd ʌb'zɜ:v ðɪ ɪk'spænjʌn ɪn ðʌ 'lɔ:ʊʌ 'æbdomen ]

6. [ stænd ænd 'ɪɛplɪkɛ:ɪt ðʌ 'pɑ:ʃʊf əv 'nʌmbʌ θɪ ʌ 'bʌv ]

7. [ ɪn'hɛ:ɪl ʌ [w] ən 'sevn kɑ:ʊnts wɪð ɪk'spænjʌn bɪ'lo:ʊ ðʌ we:ɪst ]

8. [ fəm ʌ [s] wɪð 'ɑ:ʊt 'pɪɛsɪŋ ðɪ ɑ'tɪkjule:ɪtɔ:z ]

9. [ ɪk'spel ɔɪ ðɪ ɛ:ʌf ɑ'tɪkjule:ɪtɪŋ ðʌ [s] ən 'sevn kɑ:ʊnts ]

10. [ me:ɪn'tɛ:ɪn ʌ kʌn'sɪstnt flo:ʊ əv 'æspɪɪtɛd sɑ:ʊnd ]

*Additional Goals*

[ ɪn'hɛ:ɪl ʌ 'sjutʌbʊl ʌ 'mɑ:ʊnt əv ɛ:ʌ tu mɪt ðʌ dɪ'mɑ:ndz əv ðʌ fɪɛ:ɪz ]

[ 'ðʌ 'dɑ:ɪʌfɪəm mu:vz mɑ:ɪl ðʌ ɪbz ænd 'stɜ:nʌm stɛ:ɪ kɑ:m ænd ɪ'lɪst ]



### *Efficient Use of the Air*

*The breath for singing should be a response to the musical phrase one is about to sing – the thought of the phrase should inspire the breath.*

*Cynthia Hoffmann*

Efficient use of the air is just as important as the inhalation.

Breathe in the shape of the vowel.

Do not hold the air in; neither force it out.

Allow the breath to flow out in a fine stream of air.

Imagine releasing the breath through a straw.

A candle was used in the *bel canto* period to monitor air flow.

The singer was asked to sing near the flame.

The tone was considered “pressed” if the flame flickered.

### *Warnings*

*Note:* A planned inhalation allows the singer to release all the air.

Do not raise the sternum or shoulders upon inhalation.

A loud breath indicates restriction within the air passage.

Packing up an excessive amount of air causes tension.

Do not allow the ribs to collapse.

Slumped posture does not accommodate a low expansion for the breath.

*Efficient Use of the Air*

*The breath for singing should be a response to the musical phrase one is about to sing – the thought of the phrase should inspire the breath.*

*Cynthia Hoffmann*

[ i'fiʃənt jus əv ði ɛ:ʌf ɪz dʒʌst æz ɪm'pɒtənt æz ði ɪnhʌ'le:ɪʃən ]

[ bi:ð ɪn ðʌ ʃɛ:ɪp əv ðʌ 'vɑ:ʊəl ]

[ du nat ho:ʊld ði ɛ:ʌf ɪn 'nɑ:ɪðʌ fɒs ɪt ɑ:ʊt ]

[ ʌ'la:ʊ ðʌ bi:θ tu flo:ʊ ɑ:ʊt ɪn ʌ fa:ɪn stɪɪm əv ɛ:ʌ ]

[ i'mædʒɪn ɪ'lɪsɪŋ ðʌ bi:θ θru ʌ stɪɔ ]

[ ʌ'kændəl wəz ju:zd ɪn ðʌ bɛl 'kɑnto 'pɪ:ʌfɪʌd tu 'mɑnɪʌ ɛ:ʌ flo:ʊ ]

[ ðʌ 'sɪŋʌ wəz ɑskt tu sɪŋ nɪ:ʌ ðʌ fle:ɪm ]

[ ðʌ to:ʊn wəz kʌn'sɪdʌd pɪɛst ɪf ðʌ fle:ɪm 'flɪkʌd ]

*Warnings*

*Note:* [ ʌ plænd ɪnhʌ'le:ɪʃən ʌ'la:ʊz ðʌ 'sɪŋʌ tu nɪ'lis əl ði ɛ:ʌ ]

[ du nat 'ɪɛ:ɪz ðʌ 'stɜnʌm ə 'ʃo:ʊldʌz ʌ'pɑn ɪnhʌ'le:ɪʃən ]

[ ʌ la:ʊd bi:θ 'ɪndɪkɛ:ɪts ɪ'stɪkʃən wɪð'ɪn ði ɛ:ʌ 'pæsædʒ ]

[ 'pækɪŋ ʌp ən ɪk'sɛsɪv ʌ'mɑ:ʊnt əv ɛ:ʌ 'kɔzɛz 'tɛŋʃən ]

[ du nat ʌ'la:ʊ ðʌ ɪbz tu ko'læps ]

[ slʌmpt 'pɑstʃʊ dʌz nat ʌ'kɑmɒdɛ:ɪt ʌ lo:ʊ ɪk'spæŋʃən fɔ ðʌ bi:θ ]

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