

## **Fashion Your Performance Voice**

*Practice once a day, use as a warm-up before each performance*

**Reach, Relax, find your natural center**

**Sit or stand naturally, listen to your own breathing.**

**Inventory your body, notice where you are tense,**

**Where do you need to stretch?**

**Stand and reach up, reach out, relax down. Concentrate on different parts of your body. Be gentle, hold each “reach” briefly, relax it slowly, do not bounce or deflate suddenly. Be particularly careful with your neck and head.**

**Remember your facial muscles including your tongue.**

**Relax and repeat 4 or 5 times.**

**Exercise your Breath Control**

**Engage your abdominal muscles, activate your diaphragm, and open your chest cavity by pulling your shoulder blades together.**

**1) Breathe in, filling the whole cavity, become aware of pulling air down with your diaphragm. Hold (be careful not to trap the air in by closing up your mouth and neck.), exhale, then exhale some more. Relax and let your body pull the air in.**

**2) Exercise: Inhale for 4 seconds, hold the air in for 5 seconds, release slowly, trying to take 8 seconds to exhale. Repeat 5 times.**

**3) Exercise the diaphragm by breathing in and out quickly through your nose. Practice until you can maintain a fast pace for 5 seconds.**

**Engage your vocal folds, warm up slowly and gently**

**The vocal folds are the weakest muscle in the body and can be easily damaged. Vocal folds vary in length. The longer the muscle, the lower the voice sounds. Take special care when using character voices not to force your voice too high or too low.**

**1) Begin with a tone well within your range sound it. Say “ohm”**

**2) Repeat with the other vowels**

**3) Move the sound up and down your range, using any vocal exercise you prefer.**

**4) I like to use “la” using the tongue and keeping the lower jaw still.**

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## **Explore plosives, fricatives, and other consonant combinations**

Plosives and fricatives most often trip us up, and practice is the key, especially if you have a tongue twister in the story you want to tell. Here are some suggestions.

### **Plosives are formed by stopping the air briefly: t, p, b, d, g**

- 1) I bought a box of biscuits, a box of mixed biscuits, and biscuits-mixed.
- 2) Three gray geese in the green grass grazing; gray were the geese and green was the grazing.
- 3) Tie twine to the tree twigs.
- 4) Grass grew green on the graves in Grace Gray's grandfather's graveyard.
- 5) Pete Briggs pats pigs.  
Briggs pats pink pigs.  
Briggs pats big pigs.  
Pete Briggs is a pink pig, big pig patter.
- 6) A big baby buggy with rubber buggy bumpers.
- 7) Double bubble gum bubbles double.

### **Fricatives are formed by allowing the air to escape: s, z, th v, wh**

- 1) Of all the saws I ever saw, I never saw a saw saw like that saw saws.
- 2) Does your shirt shop stock socks with spots?
- 3) Six slim slick slender saplings.
- 4) The seething sea ceaseth and thus the seething sea sufficeth us.
- 5) Fetch me the finest French-fried freshest fish that Finney fries.
- 6) The view from the veranda gave forth a fine vista of waves and leafy foliage.
- 7) While we waited for the whistle on the wharf, we whittled vigorously on the white weatherboards.