



**ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR GROWING VOICES**  
**EXAM ANSWER KEY**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. What were some areas we covered in *Building Foundations That Last*?

*Answer:* Posture, breathing, warmup and tone.

2. What are the six new areas we will be learning about in *Essential Skills for Growing Voices*?

*Answer:* Diction, dynamics, legato and staccato, tempo, rhythm and accents and voice care.

**WARMUPS**

What do you need to do even before you warmup?

*Answer:* Get into good posture with lifted hands. Remind the breathing muscles how they should be working.

**DICTION**

1. What are the three main parts of the body that help with diction?

*Answer:* Lips, tongue and teeth.

2. If you mumble when you sing where are you likely to feel the tension?

*Answer:* The throat, or larynx.

3. When you pronounce the “T” sound the right way, where should the tip of the tongue be?

*Answer:* The tip of the tongue touches the front, roof of the mouth (also called the hard pallet) just behind the top teeth.

4. Practice the “T” exercise sentence several times: *Tuna on toast tastes terrific.*

5. Practice the “N” sentence several times: *Nathan never needs noodles.*

6. Practice the “W” sentence several times: *Whitney wants watermelon.*

7. Practice the “B” sentence several times: *The bigger the burger the better the burger.*

8. Practice the “P” sentence several times: *Popping popcorn pleases people.*

9. Practice the “K/C” sentence several times: *Can Chris and Carole count Kelsey’s cousins?*

10. Practice the “S” sentence several times: *Susanna saw seven silly sandwiches singing.*

11. What are the words for the Diction Song? Speak them out loud. Be sure to use exaggerated, clear diction.

*Answer:* I use my lips. I use my tongue. I use my t t t t t t t tongue so I am clear. I use my lips. I use my tongue. I use my t t t t t t t tongue so you can hear. All the words that I sing, and the words that I speak. The message my heart has for you. All the words that I sing, and the words that I speak. The message my heart has for you. The message my heart has for you.

### **DYNAMICS**

1. What determines the volume of your voice?

*Answer:* The amount of air being moved through the larynx and the tone quality.

2. Can you think of some really loud sounds you hear on a regular basis?

*Answer:* (These should be personal, creative answers.) An airplane. A person yelling. A car horn.

3. What are some softer sounds in your life?

*Answer:* (These should be personal, creative answers.) People talking when someone nearby is sleeping. A baby happily cooing. Someone humming. A bird chirping.

### **LEGATO & STACCATO**

1. Explain the difference between legato, and staccato.

*Answer:* Legato is smooth and connected. Staccato is short and disconnected.

2. Create some legato and staccato sounds with your voice or using instruments or other objects you have.

*Answer:* This should be creative. It can include anything from legato and staccato sounds using the voice to dragging a show across the floor (legato), closing a door (staccato) humming (legato) and, of course, using musical instruments. The possibilities are endless.

### **RHYTHM & ACCENTS**

Using a basketball, soccer ball or even just clapping start very slow, then get faster and faster. Then, while clapping, accent different beats of a 1 2 3 4 pattern.

*Answer:* Accent samples 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4, 1 2 3 4.

### **TEMPO**

What is tempo?

*Answer:* How fast or slow it is.

### **LOUD, SOFT, FAST, SLOW SONG**

Speak through the words of the Loud, Soft, Fast, Slow song. Be sure to be loud, soft, legato or staccato at the appropriate times.

*Lyrics:* This is very loud, this is soft and gentle, this is connected, this is not. (Repeat)

This is very loud, this is soft and gentle, this is connected, this is not.

This is very, very, very, very fast. This is very slow. (Repeat)

### **VOICE CARE**

1. Why should you avoid yelling and screaming?

*Answer:* It's very hard on the voice and can even damage it.

2. Why is a grinding sound a bad idea when trying to clear the throat?

*Answer:* It is unnatural and can be damaging to make a grinding sound while trying to clear the throat. What's worse, when you make that sound it not only doesn't clear the throat, it makes things worse. What is the right way to clear something from the throat?

*Answer:* Use just air while exhaling on a Haaaa sound. Then swallow. (This can be done so softly and gently that no one will know you're doing it.)

3. We should all drink about half our body weight in ounces of water daily. If you weigh 80 pounds that means 40 ounces of water. How much water can be lost through the breath by an adult in one major concert?

*Answer:* One gallon, or more.

4. What is laryngitis?

*Answer:* A physical condition where the vocal folds (vocal cords) are swollen, causing partial or total loss of normal vocal sound.

5. What should you do if you get laryngitis?

*Answer:* Let the voice rest, and don't whisper. Breathe steam in through the mouth and nose. Also, try to figure out if your laryngitis was caused by over-using your voice so you can avoid it in the future.

6. What are at least four basics you should remember every day?

*Answer:* Posture, breathing, warmups, tone, diction, vocal health.

**If you have questions or suggestions** for the vocal coach please email [chris@vocalcoach.com](mailto:chris@vocalcoach.com) and be sure to visit our web site and blog for vocal tips and special offers.

***Thank you,  
The Vocal Coach Team***