

Kathleen Klosterman
MUSE 258

Citation

Teaching Kids to Sing
Chapter 9: An Overview of the Method
Kenneth H. Phillips
2014

Summary

- I. A Rationale for Teaching Kids to Sing
 - A. Singing is a basic means of human expression
 - B. Singing is a complex skill that takes time to develop coordination of the psychological and motor responses needed for successful vocal production. Therefore, instruction must begin in early childhood, when other basic skills are being cultivated.
 - C. Song is appealing to youth because it brings them together, and helps them learn about life. They can express themselves and relate to music.
- II. Five Main Parts of the Music Curriculum
 - A. Part 1: Energize the Body
 - B. Part 2: Energize the Breath
 - C. Part 3: Energize the Ear
 - D. Part 4: Energize the Voice
 - E. Part 5: Energize the Song
- III. Method or Approach?
 - A. A method is a well-defined, step-by-step process of instruction
 - B. An approach is “picking and choosing” from a sequence of exercises rather than subscribing to a sequential plan of action
 - C. Instructors should lay a solid foundation for their students with exercises in Body and Breath.
- IV. Energize the Body
 - A. The body should be thought of as the singers’ instrument, and students need to energize and align the body to maximize the physical response.
 - B. The two areas of exercises included in Physical Conditioning are Stretches and Shakes
 - C. Good posture can be taught or learned by practicing it just like other exercises for singing, and demonstrating it on a daily basis, returning to it if posture sags or gets worse.
 - D. “The Look” involves seven posture elements:
 - i. Feet flat on the floor, one foot slightly ahead of the other
 - ii. Knees slightly relaxed
 - iii. Spine lifted up and out of the hips
 - iv. Shoulders slightly back and down
 - v. Sternum up throughout the act of singing
 - vi. Head high and level
 - vii. Hands and arms down and back at the sides
- V. Energize the Breath

- A. Breathing Motion involves inhalation and exhalation.
 - B. Appoggio in relation to breath management is balanced resistance among various muscle groups involved in the support process.
- VI. Aural Acuity
- A. Aural Acuity is accurately hearing and remembering pitches involving pitch perception and tonal memory.
 - B. Pitch Discrimination is recognizing and labeling pitch differences (audiation) using intervals, triads, scales, and tonal patterns.
- VII. Energize the Voice
- A. Crico-Thyroid (CT) is the upper register of the singing voice
 - B. Thyro-Arytenoid (TA) is the lower register of the singing voice
 - C. Crico-Thyroid/Thyro-Arytenoid (CT/TA) is the middle register of the singing voice
 - D. Teachers' speaking voices should be elevated because they avoid hoarseness and loss of voice caused by too much vocal fold contact when the voice is pitched too low.
 - E. A vowel is one vowel sound and a diphthong is a single or compound vowel that has two vowel sounds within it.
 - F. The beauty of the voice comes from the vowels.
 - G. Singing with an open throat requires relaxed swallowing muscles, a relaxed jaw, and a larynx at rest.
- VIII. Energize the Song
- A. Diction is the manner in which a language is spoken.
 - B. Pronunciation is the manner in which a word is spoken.
 - C. Enunciation is the manner in which a vowel is spoken.
 - D. Articulation is the manner in which a consonant is spoken.
 - E. The characteristics of singers' diction are consonant articulation and word pronunciation.
 - F. The life of music is found in the phrasing.
 - G. Sculpted phrasing requires energy that sends the phrase forward and "lifts" the music from the page.
 - H. The basic elements of expression are tempo, dynamics, and agility.
- IX. Singing Assessment
- A. Students should have regular vocal assessments because teachers can see students' progress through the time period, and know what material to revisit, and where and when to move on.
 - B. Sampling is when each child is heard individually on a tonal pattern or vocalise to learn about students' progress.
 - C. Music recommended to be used for vocal assessment are both tonal patterns and song phrases.

Discussion

This chapter talked specifically about the method Kenneth H. Phillips designed to teach students how to sing. It involved energizing the body, breath, ear, voice, and song, and talked about how to engage students in exercises to make these things all work together to produce sound. It gave specific goals and objectives

teachers should have in mind when teaching this method to their students. I found this method and this chapter very informative, and what I should look for when I am teaching students. It talked about the different areas of the method that should be taught and how they will affect children's singing voices if done correctly. It noted the differences between terms we use everyday, and what sorts of musical and singing assessment to use when assessing students. I feel that I will learn more about this method of teaching students to sing and the exercises that are given with them in the next chapters, and will be able to use these with my students in the future. This chapter gave many reasons why all children should learn to sing and that singing is a learned behavior, so all children can learn to sing. I liked that it talked about the benefits singing can have to students and the relation it has to the other areas of curriculum. I feel that I can put these same thoughts and motives into my lessons and my students' minds, so they can truly understand how beneficial music is to their lives.