

FUNDAMENTALS OF TEACHING VOCAL MUSIC PERFORMANCE

by

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Liberty University

A MASTER'S THESIS PRESENTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT  
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF  
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## ABSTRACT

This study outlines the significance and sole purpose of developing fundamental techniques of student vocal music performances, using professional constructive evaluation that will improve their overall performance experience. One of the most practical ways to support vocalists is to provide constructive evaluation of their performances. The implementation of a constructive evaluation is to reflect upon what is being done well, discover areas of improvement or refinement, plan and facilitate important lessons, and apply the lessons to future performances. As a music teacher who is actively overseeing the development of students as performing or creating musicians, including constructive evaluation is a standard expectation. Methodical, thorough self-evaluations and peer evaluations are enormously valuable practices for young vocalists. In rehearsals, workshops, and other group situations, constructive evaluation from peers will also be very useful, but only if group members understand how to offer the evaluation. To give a high-quality performance, vocalists must get in the habit of evaluating themselves as often as possible. An evaluation that is offered sloppily or in the wrong spirit can be damaging to the student's vocal development. This study will also include a plethora of techniques for creating positive, useful evaluations, including: Analyzing the Performance, Self & Peer-Evaluations, *Glows and Grows*, Use of Fundamental Elements of Music, Solutions Oriented Feedback, and helping students develop coping skills for performance anxiety. The principles and ideas offered for private instruction can also be quite valuable to choir and ensemble directors, praise and worship teams, group lessons, and music theatre singers.

*Keywords:* Constructive Evaluation, Self & Peer-Evaluation, Performance Anxiety.

## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

In one way or another, many vocal performers have faced performance anxiety. However, every case is quite unique depending on the performer's level of experience. This means that the magnitude to which the anxiety targets singing is distinctively individualized, including the collaboration of a variety of symptoms. Nonetheless, this can evolve throughout the careers of both student and professional singers. It is beyond imperative that all vocalists should have a variety of coping mechanisms to combat these anxieties suitable for themselves because what may be an effective technique for one, may not have positive outcomes for another.

Performance anxiety can be defined as the stress a performer endures as a reaction to performing their talents in front of an audience. Enduring this type of stress prior to a performance can be a good thing. This phase shows that the vocalist has a strong love for performing and has a strong desire to perform well. Performance anxiety can also trigger stressors that are more detrimental to the overall performance. In this phase of anxiety, the vocalist can lose all control of every vocal technique learned overtime, and it is at this point where the performance begins to suffer, especially without the proper strategies to cope.

In a seminar facilitated by Dr. Keith Currie called, *Fire under Control: Performance Anxiety Coping Skills*, performance anxiety is compared to fire. He declared that, "in the furnace, in the fireplace, and on a stove, fire is useful to use because it is under control. But if fire gets out of control, it can burn the house down!"<sup>1</sup> Much like fire, if a vocalist lacks control, the performance will go down in flames. This thesis uncovers how constructive evaluation is a positive resource for the development of effective vocal performance, and provides tips on the best coping strategies to use when experiencing anxiety before and during a performance.

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<sup>1</sup> Currie, Keith A (2001). Performance Anxiety Coping Skills Seminar: Is it effective in reducing musical performance anxiety and enhancing musical performance? Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

## CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

It is no secret that giving and receiving an evaluation is not easy. This is specifically evident for constructive evaluations. A constructive evaluation is a form of support that assists the recipient with attaining positive results. Some of the most experienced music professionals even have difficulty delivering evaluations effectively. In a given evaluation it is often easier to focus on addressing negative performance data than verbalizing what went well during a performance. By acknowledging and highlighting positive performance skills, the evaluation becomes more valuable to both the instructor, but most importantly, the vocalist. In congruence, it creates a beautiful culture in which constructive evaluations more accepted rather than feared and avoided. This is a culture that is open to growth in vocal performance.

As a music educator who is actively overseeing the development of students as performing musicians, one should consider including constructive evaluation as standard expectation. However, an evaluation that is given without discernment, or given without the correct communication can be damaging to the student's vocal development. So, vocal music instructors must arm themselves with copious evaluation techniques that will help them manage their delivery effectively, but also promote the continued development of their students' interest in vocal music, and their willingness to get back on stage with the skills needed to perform at a higher level during each performance.

A few evaluative categories to consider while preparing successful student vocalists include: Analyzing the Performance, Self & Peer-Evaluations, *Glows and Grows*, Use of Fundamental Elements of Music, Solutions Oriented Feedback, and Performance Anxiety Coping Skills. These categories will keep the evaluation process professional and away from poor practice.

Analyzing the performance focuses the constructive evaluation on any given performance. An evaluation that is too general can be perceived as lacking care from the evaluator, and in return the vocalist feels personally attacked which must be prevented. To provide the most effective evaluation, the instructor should seek out components of the vocal performance in which the singer executes properly, but can benefit from further practice to take that performance skill to the next level. For instance, a great starting point could be the evaluation of the performers posture while singing. Posture can be a serious concern while singing, especially with younger vocalists, however, in professional singing careers such as opera and musical theater, posture is fundamental to proper singing.

According to the research of Gillian Johnson and Margot Skinner,

“Professional opera singing involves interactions between the laryngeal structures and the cervical spine vertebrae, which vary according to the singer’s vocal timbre and intensity. Correct posture alignment of the head and neck is a necessary element in the optimization of voice production. Positional changes to head and neck posture have been shown to alter the quality of the voice, thereby supporting the hypothesis that the motor system controlling phonation is functionally coupled with the motor system controlling posture of the head and neck. Any process impairing anterior or posterior movement of the cervical spine is likely to impact on the exquisite control of airflow and air pressure through the vocal tract required for accuracy of the singing task.<sup>2</sup>”

Anterior-posterior movement of the cervical spine is the forward and backward bending of the vertebrae. As the vocalist is performing, the evaluator should be observing the position of the head and neck, assuring they have a safe alignment with the spine. If there appears to be struggle with correcting the alignment to the spine, head, and neck, the evaluator may find that the vocalist’s singing is slightly or significantly impaired, which must be included within the evaluative feedback.

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<sup>2</sup> Gillian Johnson, Margot Skinner, “The demands of professional opera singing on cranio-cervical posture,” Jerry Falwell Library, (Spring 2009)  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2899464/?tool=pmcentrez&report=abstract> (accessed January 23, 2009).

The evaluation should be given as close to the chosen performance as possible, and should avoid mixing the personal preferences of the instructor with the emphasis of generally-accepted pedagogical practices. Waiting too long to provide the feedback from the constructive evaluation will compromise the recollection of all assessed components the vocal performance. The recall of detailed pieces of the performance will swiftly wither and get tangled with the memory of other previously evaluated performances. Providing feedback immediately will guarantee that the instructor is as clear and concise as possible and the vocalist can reflect on his memory of the performance that led to the constructive evaluation. Whenever the evaluation, it is imperative that the instructor records notes and provides the feedback as soon as he is able. This process promotes the long-term growth of the student singer's learning.

“Feedback is a powerful way to achieve improvement in teaching and learning. It is an integral part of every teacher's practice and when used effectively can improve student learning by as much as eight months...What does research tell us about feedback in teaching? Feedback is an ongoing process of goal setting, gathering evidence about student learning, and providing instruction that makes clear the next actions to improve performance.<sup>3</sup>”

Professional vocalists and instructors may feel encouraged to share their personal preferences within the constructive evaluation, however, it is important to have a clear separation from the general pedagogical feedback. A perfect example of an unclear evaluation is, “I prefer my students to produce an intensely mellow tone color on this part of the Aria. Let's make sure this happens each time you sing it, and hopefully you will like it the same way I do.” To more clearly articulate the difference between personal preference and pedagogical standards, the instructor may want to alter the framing of the professional language. “I really like how intensely focused you are when you sing softly on this part of the Aria, I would love for you to consider producing

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<sup>3</sup> Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, “Effective feedback animation,” April 18, 2017, video, <https://youtu.be/LjCzbSLyIwI>.

that same intensity when you sing louder dynamics.” This style of feedback exhibits a higher level of care for the vocalist’s preference and makes it clear that the constructive evaluation is not only compiled with the instructor’s preferences. Although, this feedback is a suggestion, the vocalist should consider adopting his instructor’s feedback. It shows a high level of trust and respect for the instructor’s expertise.

“The purpose of feedback is to help the recipient perform a skill better, and it usually does. After all, practice doesn’t make perfect if, as is typical, you start out doing something imperfectly and never get feedback on how to do it better...Feedback to students can come from any number of sources: the instructor, of course, but also peers and oneself. But it’s a two-way street. To improve student achievement, we need feedback from students to assess their progress and suggest how we might enhance their learning.<sup>4</sup>”

Methodical, thorough self-evaluations and peer evaluations are enormously valuable practices for young vocalists. Being able to facilitate self-evaluations is an extremely convenient skill for a vocalist. This independent strategy makes voice rehearsal more resourceful and sufficient as the performer learns to pinpoint and resolve technical issues on their own. Vocal students must be motivated to practice self-evaluating their performances to the extent that their vocal maturity permits as frequent as possible.

Author Alina Tran shared in an article that,

“Peer and self-grading of course work has been correlated with improving course performance. In a review of 63 studies that used peer and self-grading in higher education, found that the vast majority of students saw benefit in peer assessment, that students who self-assess while learning score higher on tests than those without self-assessment, and that self-assessment leads to more self-reflection and responsibility for one’s own learning.<sup>5</sup>”

How this applies to vocal performance is, the self-assessment and grading is equivalent to self-

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<sup>4</sup> Linda B. Nilson, *Teaching at its Best: A Research-Based Resource for College Instructors*, (Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA 2016), 271

<sup>5</sup> Mallory A Johnson, Alina Tran, Mary Pat Wenderoth, Jennifer H. Doherty, “Peer vs. Self-Grading of Practice Exams,” Jerry Falwell Library, (Spring 2009)  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2899464/?tool=pmcentrez&report=abstract> (accessed January 23, 2009).

evaluation in which the vocal student must provide their own feedback, whereas peers assessment is equivalent to peer evaluations, which calls for someone of equal vocal maturity providing feed on a given performance.

A great way to direct students to successfully evaluate, instructors should educate their vocalists on how to actively listen during performances. To help students develop significant listening skills, every given task must involve listening to vocal performances in person and through previous recorded audios and video. The student should then describe exactly what is heard and evaluate what needs to be worked on. That technique opens opportunity for students to self-reflect and evaluate their performances. It is possible that novice singers will not have the ability to self-evaluate at all. This approach takes a ton of practice to perform and listen thoroughly simultaneously. Especially considering that this is the vocalist's most pure form of creation, to be able to analyze in and provide a self-evaluation, or receive it from one's peers is quite difficult. Instructors should support by providing valuable constructive evaluation.

However, the feedback can also be ineffective for a number of causes.

“First, for whatever reason, a student may just not be capable of meeting the higher standards the feedback given sets as a goal, at least not within the time limit allowed. People have different abilities, and some require far longer than a week or even a semester to bring certain skills up to par. A second possibility is that a student may not agree with our performance standards, in which case it falls on us to change their minds...A third reason feedback may fail is that a student may not correctly perceive our performance standards, and finally, a student may not correctly evaluate her performance against our standards.<sup>6</sup>”

The most effective self-evaluations should be executed before the instructor's constructive evaluation. The instructor should encourage the vocalist to give himself an

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<sup>6</sup> Linda B. Nilson, *Teaching at its Best: A Research-Based Resource for College Instructors*, (Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA 2016), 271

evaluation that includes detailed *Glows and Grows* prior receiving evaluations from their peers. *Glows* are positive comments that highlight the skills that were executed proficiently during a given performance, and *Grows* are comments that provide solutions for the areas of growth in which the vocalist needs more practice to develop his performance effectively. Peer evaluations not only give vocalists more varied, immediate, and frequent feedback than the instructor, but it also provides them time to develop communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and life-long learning skills. This is an extra opportunity for student vocalists to develop their self-evaluative skills, and can bring awareness for the teacher. Useful adjustments to the performance slightly depend on if the student is unaware of the technical issues, or aware of it and incapable of adjusting their practice to improve their skills. Instructors must be aware that their constructive evaluation can include feedback about student evaluation to self and his peers, outlining which feedback is true and suitable and if the young vocalist is recalling their performance precisely.

When providing constructive evaluations, whether teacher to student, student to self, or peer to peer, it is important to consider delivering a sequence of *Glows and Grows* in the feedback. *Glows and Grows* are a way of thinking positively about constructive evaluations that involve reflective practice, and as a facilitator of constructive evaluation, one should always begin their feedback with a *Glow*, the positive comments, follow up with a *Grow*, comments about improvement. Initiating an evaluation with, at minimum, one glow acknowledges the recipient's dynamic skill level. This feedback technique is a positive way to encourage the vocalist to return to the stage again, and reinforces the values of quality performance. The constructive evaluation is not a means of an attack on the performer's abilities; so be honest and not brutal.

“Feedback can be categorized as positive or negative. Positive feedback is used to indicate that an expected or desired behavior was demonstrated, or to reinforce

successive steps toward a goal. Negative feedback indicates that a behavior or task was not performed correctly, thus indicating that a change of behavior is needed. It has been found generally that those who receive positive feedback achieve greater success in subsequent performance while those who receive negative feedback perform worse. However, some studies have reported contrary findings in which constructive criticism is more effective at improving skill than compliments. The findings of studies are inconsistent as to which type of feedback helps students to improve their performance or the ability to judge their own performance.<sup>7</sup>”

Dishonest feedback or dishonest glowing remarks are detrimental as they may strengthen low-performance practices. Sometimes it can be difficult to provide a positive comment. In this case, if a glowing evaluation cannot be delivered with the feedback, the evaluator can either listen more cautiously or think about where the vocalist’s skill level was months prior to the chosen performance. There are several things an instructor can listen for: intonation, rhythmic nuances, meter timing, use of dynamics, inflections and articulations, and tone quality. It is critical to be very intentional in one’s framing and delivery. Almost anybody can listen to a vocal performance and say, “That was amazing” or “wow, you can really sing!” These sorts of comments hold no substantial value; therefore, they do not benefit the performer’s growth. Glowing remarks that are clear and offer specificity from an instructor, peer, or self can be constructed like this: “Your use of articulation was very concise during the melisma section” or “Your phrasing was much more successful this time.” Glowing remarks like these reinforce stronger performance techniques. Beginner vocal performers may not be equipped with the skills to differentiate which vocal techniques are yielding the preferred outcomes. Thus, glowing remarks that are meant to be positive can be viewed as negative.

Providing input for improvement must not overwhelm the performer. Comments that discuss the continued growth of the vocalist’s skills can often feel disheartening or so

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<sup>7</sup> Kim, E.J., Lee, K.R. Effects of an examiner’s positive and negative feedback on self-assessment of skill performance, emotional response, and self-efficacy in Korea: a quasi-experimental study. *BMC Med Educ* 19, 142 (2019). <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12909-019-1595-x#citeas>

overwhelming that the validity of the comments will be easily misconstrued or even disregarded. A majority of young vocalists can single-handedly develop as many as two areas of growth at once. Assisting them with the tools to concentrate on those two suggestions would be most effective. Efforts to work on any further technical difficulties can be postponed.

As the constructive evaluation feedback is being prioritized, the instructor can concentrate on immediate issues; one's that can be easily pinpointed, one's that cause several developing vocal issues for the vocalist, and or issues that make it more difficult for the performer to improve their areas of growth. If the vocalist has made proficient progress, it should be possible to find something honest, detailed, and positive to comment, even if it is only to communicate that some of the targeted fundamental elements of music have advanced in their performance compared to performances from the past. It should also always be possible to provide comments to outline areas of growth, especially in the case of high-performing vocalists. This could possibly mean encouraging him to perform skills that their peers may not be ready to achieve. Like most performance skills, constructive feedback improves performance. Keep in mind, that certain evaluative comments that advise tweaks to the performance techniques are far more valuable than basic accounts of discontent. Take this as an example, "The syncopated rhythms are producing a triplet sound" is quite useful in comparison to this comment; "those rhythms are incorrect and displeasing." Consider these as well, "The high notes sound a bit too airy and unsupported" is a much more distinguished comment in relation to a comment that suggests, "I don't like the sound of your high notes."

When progressing through the peer evaluation and self-evaluation process, an instructor may consider implementing the Constructive Evaluation Element Chart found in table 1.1, on the

following page, in this teaching method. This will be highly beneficial to the note-keeping and feedback preparation routine, and can be specific to the Instructor, Peer or Subject Student.

Table 1.1 – Constructive Evaluation Element Chart

ELEMENT	COMMENT
Pitch / Intonation	
Rhythm	
Accents / Articulations	
Diction / Text	
Dynamics	
Tempo	
Tone Quality	
Vocal Technique	
Posture / Physicality	
Overall Performance	

It is not necessary to share the chart with the vocalist; however, the evaluator can utilize its structure to execute a more focus-driven approach to the constructive evaluation. Evaluation facilitators who may be new to providing feedback, and are unsure of which performance components to provide feedback on, they may want to ask themselves a few critical questions based upon the following elements of music.

- 1) Pitch / Intonation
  - What is pitch / intonation?

- Pitch defines the location of a tone in relation to others, thus giving it a sense of being high or low.<sup>8</sup>
  - Intonation is a term referring to the proper production of a tone that it is in tune.<sup>9</sup>
  - Is the vocalist singing the correct pitches, and are they in tune?
- 2) Rhythm
- What is rhythm?
    - Rhythm is the controlled movement of music in time. It may be defined as the division of music into regular metric portions; the regular pulsation of music<sup>10</sup>.
  - Are all of the rhythms being performed precisely?
  - Is the performance smooth and without hesitation?
  - Does the vocalist express a clear sense of meter? (If there is one.)
  - Does the vocalist express a clear sense of a free-flowing rhythmic line? (If there isn't)
- 3) Accents / Articulations
- What are accents / articulations?
    - An accent is a stress or special emphasis on a beat to mark its position in the measure.<sup>11</sup>
    - Directions to a performer typically through symbols and icons on a musical score that indicate characteristics of the attack, duration, and decay of a given note<sup>12</sup>.
  - Were articulations used properly?
    - Performed musically?
    - With good technique?
    - With attention to the style of music?
- 4) Diction / Text
- What is diction?
    - Diction is the style of enunciation expressed through speaking or singing.
    - What is the difference between enunciation and pronunciation?
      - Pronunciation is related to the word itself, focusing on which syllables should be emphasized and how certain letters should sound when spoken.
      - Enunciation refers to how clearly and distinctly a particular individual form the sounds that make up a word.
  - Did the vocalist articulate the text clearly?
  - Did the vocalist use the correct phonics while singing?
    - In any language?
- 5) Dynamics
- What are dynamics?

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<sup>8</sup> Richard Cole, Ed Schwartz, Connect for Education, Inc., OnMusic Dictionary, (Virginia Tech Multimedia Music Dictionary, 1999). <https://dictionary.onmusic.org>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

- Dynamics are the loudness or softness of a composition.<sup>13</sup>
- Has the vocalist included the dynamics from the score?
- 6) Tempo
  - What is tempo?
    - Tempo is the speed of the rhythm of a composition.<sup>14</sup>
      - It is measured according to beats per minute.
  - Did the performer choose an appropriate tempo for this piece?
  - Are the changes in tempo strategic? (If any)
    - Effective?
    - Accidental?
    - Distracting?
- 7) Tone Quality
  - What is tone quality?
    - The particular sound of an instrument or voice, as well as the performer's particular coloring of that sound.<sup>15</sup>
  - Is the vocalist's tone quality clear?
- 8) Posture / Physicality
  - What is posture?
    - Posture is the position in which we hold our bodies while standing, sitting, or lying down.
      - The key to good posture is the position of your spine.
        - ◆ Your spine has three natural curves - at your neck, mid back, and low back.
      - Correct posture should maintain these curves, but not increase them.
        - ◆ Your head should be above your shoulders, and the top of your shoulder should be over the hips.
  - Are the performer's physical movements comfortable and appropriate for singing?
- 9) Overall Performance
  - Do any elements of the performance have a positive or negative effect on the audience?
  - Has the performer displayed a high level of confidence while on stage?

The evaluator may discover countless issues during the vocal performance. If the vocalist is not mindful of the issue, simply stating the issue and teaching the proper way to correct it may possibly be the only thing needed to support the singer. However, if the vocalist is aware of their errors in performance, and may have a few struggles with pointing them out, the primary goal during the evaluative feedback session should be to assist the vocalist with appropriate tools

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<sup>13</sup> Richard Cole, Ed Schwartz, Connect for Education, Inc., OnMusic Dictionary, (Virginia Tech Multimedia Music Dictionary, 1999). <https://dictionary.onmusic.org>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid

<sup>15</sup> Ibid

needed to recognize when these performance errors occur and how soon they should be fixed. The instructor may possibly model the desired rhythm or tone quality. These demonstrations may also include the direct instruction with tips to analyze their own performances so that the process to make adjustment will be run more smoothly.

It is rare that vocal students will disagree with the instructors vocal and performance health philosophies, but if this rare occasion happens to occur, the instructor might want to use some psychology to find the source of the resistance and try to encourage the young vocalist that the suggested techniques are much more impactful. This may happen if the feedback given during the constructive evaluation is objective.

“Of importance, participants receiving positive objective feedback were considerably more pleased than those receiving negative feedback. This suggests, at least indirectly, that objective feedback was impactful, even if it did not influence positive emotions.<sup>16</sup>”

Using a more personal preference style of feedback, the student vocalist may need clarification on what the instructor is specifically asking for, and steps on how to get it done. Furthermore, if the vocalist can recognize the issue yet is unable to make adjustments, just simply making the student aware of it will not be helpful, not even the slightest bit. In this case, simply saying what the issues are can be extremely disheartening to the vocalist. This voice lesson should focus on a strategic plan that will help fix the problem; problems such as poor vocal diction during a song performed in the French language, suggesting quick fixes when possible; like changing the vocalist’s vowel shapes or even their jaw placement while singing. Helping students establish consistent practice routines with technical exercises, warm-ups and

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<sup>16</sup> Klein, William M.P. “Effects of Objective Feedback and ‘Single Other’ or ‘Average Other’ Social Comparison Feedback on Performance Judgments and Helping Behavior.” *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 29, no. 3 (March 2003): 418–29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167203251195>.

good practice methods can help them improve quickly. Although, without the proper coping skills none of these strategies will matter.

Preparing a vocalist for a performance can be a challenging mission because of their nervousness. This nervousness is also known as anxiety. In one way or another, many performers have faced performance anxiety. However, every case is quite unique depending on the performer's level of experience, mental health, emotional stability, and his practice approach. This means that the magnitude to which the anxiety targets singing is distinctively individualized, including the collaboration of a variety of symptoms. Nonetheless, this can evolve throughout the careers of both student and professional singers.

When thinking of the fundamental breakdown of performance anxiety, one should consider the collaboration of the following symptoms of anxiety.

❖ Physical Symptoms

- Physical symptoms of performance anxiety may include
  - nausea
  - dizziness
  - rapid heart rate
  - trembling
  - shortness of breath
  - dry mouth
  - sweating and increased muscle tension.

❖ Cognitive Element

- Cognitive elements of performance anxiety involve
  - deeply rooted thoughts
  - ongoing worries
  - skewed Concentration
  - dwelling on negative thoughts about the performance and the self.

❖ Psychological Element

- Psychological elements of performance anxiety exude
  - feelings of inadequacy
  - fear of disapproval
  - fear of fear
  - irrational exaggeration of the performance situation
    - emotionally
      - ◆ irrational exaggeration drives the vocalist to think of the performance as a test of their worth as a person

- a life-or-death situation
- ❖ Behavioral Changes
  - The behavioral changes of performance anxiety are typically in response to the above:
    - The outcomes of behavioral changes may cause the vocalist to
      - ◆ Avoid the performance
        - inviting people to the performance
          - talking about the performance.
      - ◆ Deciding not to do performances
      - ◆ Postponing the performance

In moments where the vocalist is experiencing physical symptoms of performance anxiety, hydration may definitely combat a majority, if not all of the physical symptoms.

“Students should have a container of liquid available, room temperature water is best, sipped slowly. Large gulps will force air down the throat which may result in an untimely burp. If plain water isn’t to their liking, try something else. When an individual’s body chemistry tends to be “acidic,” he/she may try warm tea with a teaspoon of natural honey in it. If an individual’s body chemistry is average, drink warm tea with a teaspoon of lemon juice and sweetened to taste. For some, coffee is fine, caffeine or de-caffeinated as the person prefers. Caffeine can make one more nervous than usual before performance, but then, in some individuals it can have a relaxing effect. Know your student before specifying recommendations. The very thought of drinking a warm liquid tends to have a soothing effect on throat strictures. Besides, merely having something in the hand or nearby can be relaxing.<sup>17</sup>”

Taking deep breaths is another effective way to relax the body and de-escalate the physical symptoms. Here is a simple relaxation exercise that can be used when feeling performance anxiety:

“Make a fist with both hands, tightening your hand and arm muscles. Now, let your hands drop to your sides and hang heavy and limp. Close your eyes and send feelings of

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<sup>17</sup> Asner, Marie. “Overcoming Vocal Performance Anxiety.” *American Music Teacher* 36, no. 4 (1987): 40-41. Accessed September 27, 2020. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43547289>.

relaxation to various muscle groups in your body. Raise your shoulders; now let them drop, keeping your tall posture. Roll your head around and relax all your neck muscles. Swallow and yawn as you inhale slowly through your nose and exhale ever so slowly. Inhale and exhale slowly and deeply, relaxing all your muscles.<sup>18</sup>

For cognitive and psychological elements need to be addressed before a performance to avoid them getting out of control. So, it is important to figure out what positive mental and physical practices work best for one’s particular form of performance anxiety. To be effective, this mental routine must be structured like a real practice, with self-evaluation, problem solving, and correction of mistakes. In Table 2.1, check out a few ideas on how to get started on a journey of positive practice to break down performance anxiety.

Table 2.1 – A Guide to Positive Mental Practice

<b>GOALS</b>	<b>POSITIVE MENTAL PRACTICES<sup>19</sup></b>
<b>Calm Down</b>	Close your eyes and breathe for 60 seconds. Inhale deeply through your nose, and exhale through your mouth. Allow any tension to escape your body.
<b>Expand Your Focus</b>	Visualize how you want to see yourself perform on stage. Make this vision as vivid as possible and create the positive performance environment you want.
<b>Warm Up</b>	Picture yourself singing and warming up. See how vividly you can mentally recall the techniques involved in singing.
<b>Imagine</b>	Imagine yourself starting to sing. Concentrate on the process it takes to produce the sounds you want as you go through the music mentally.
<b>TiVo It</b>	When you “hear” or “see” yourself sing something that doesn’t sound like you want it to, immediately hit the pause button on your mental TiVo.
<b>Keep It Real</b>	It’s important to make the experience as vivid and real as you can.

<sup>18</sup> Currie, Keith A (2001). Performance Anxiety Coping Skills Seminar: Is it effective in reducing musical performance anxiety and enhancing musical performance? Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. www.lib.vt.edu, VT Electronic Dissertation 2001 Currie.

<sup>19</sup> Noa Kageyama, Ph.D., Does Mental Practice Work? The Bulletproof Musician <https://bulletproofmusician.com/does-mental-practice-work/>

Behavioral changes often occur for younger vocal performers. The outcomes of his performance anxiety cause the vocalist to begin avoiding the performance. Often times when the vocalist has gotten to this point, he may feel that “the moment I step foot on the stage I will spontaneously combust” or “If I go out there, everyone will laugh at my singing.” Another anxiety driven behavior might be to not invite friends, family and colleagues to the performance, postponing the performance, or not performing at all. A great way to defeat these changes is to center oneself in spiritual wisdom. “Wisdom is looking at all of life from God’s point of view<sup>20</sup>.” In these moments of fear, ask God for the spirit of boldness and fearlessness, and the power of God will be boldly present to provide you a victorious performance. *“So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”<sup>21</sup>*

God did not provide us with a spirit of fear, but he has given us a spirit of perfect love, discipline and self-control. Perfect love is the kind of love that is centered around pleasing God and seeking others welfare before one’s own. Once you are able to look beyond self-worship and utilize your gift of song to bless and connect with all who hears you. *“There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.”<sup>22</sup>* With perfect love comes unwavering promise and power. God promises to never leave your side, so trust in Him. Having God by your side provides you with great power; the power to believe that you can do anything you work hard to achieve. *“For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love, and self-discipline.”<sup>23</sup>*

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<sup>20</sup> Currie, Keith A (2001). Performance Anxiety Coping Skills Seminar

<sup>21</sup> Isaiah 41:10 (NIV) Hodder & Stoughton, UK, 2011

<sup>22</sup> 1 John 4:18 (NIV) Hodder & Stoughton, UK, 2011

<sup>23</sup> 2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV) Hodder & Stoughton, UK, 2011

### CHAPTER III: METHODS

The case study below includes how a hypothetical vocalist, Student X, would cope with performance anxiety through the use of constructive evaluation by analyzing his performances, self-evaluation, the use of *Glows and Grows* approach, the use of the fundamental elements of music, and solutions-oriented feedback.

Imagine that Student X just joined a voice studio, our initial discussions would be centered around his vocal goals, and what he believes to be his strengths and areas of growth in vocal performance. Student X might share that he wants his tone to be clearer and more concise, to develop confidence in both singing and performing, to stretch and strengthen his vocal range, and he might also share his desire to sustain his breath while singing the correct pitches in a given. Believe it or not, having performance anxiety and not having the appropriate skills to cope with it can cause a hindrance which can keep Student X from making any progress. However, analyzing his performances would be a huge help.

As mentioned previously, analyzing the performance focuses the constructive evaluation on any given performance. To provide an effective evaluation, I would to seek out components of the vocal performance which Student X executed well, but can benefit from further practice to take that performance skill to the next level and achieve his desired goals. If Student X were in my voice student, I may choose to evaluate his performance of *Go the Distance* from Broadway's *Hercules*. To provide myself some support before providing the evaluations, I would use the Constructive Evaluation Element Chart. The music elements that I would assess are his intonation, rhythm, articulations, diction, dynamics, tempo, tone, posture, and vocal tone. The chart displays growing remarks and input for improvement that I would provide Student X after a hypothetical performance.

Student X – Constructive Evaluation Element Chart

ELEMENT	COMMENT
<b>Pitch / Intonation</b>	I really enjoy the consistency of his intonation during the introduction of the performance. Unfortunately, due to his shortness of breath, his intonation was not consistent throughout the remainder of the piece. However, I could sense his intense anxiety, which has contributed to the fallen pitch and shortness of breath.
<b>Rhythm</b>	Student X did a great job at using subtle ornamentations in addition to the rhythms that were written. He must keep in mind that this does not work for every theater song. Furthermore, because his performance anxiety has caused shortness of breath, Student X would shorten his ending half notes and 8 <sup>th</sup> notes. The result is incorrect rhythms and timing.
<b>Accents / Articulations</b>	Student X was quite articulate during this performance. His accents and articulations complemented the rhythms and text well.
<b>Diction / Text</b>	Musical theater demands a high level of diction, and Student X’s English diction was very clear and quite fluent. I could understand every word he sang. I would encourage him to keep this same focus during his foreign language pieces.
<b>Dynamics</b>	Student X executed the closing dynamics of this piece gracefully. As the song came to an end, he chose to gradually decrease the intensity and volume of his voice, bringing this song to a peaceful end.
<b>Tempo</b>	During the second chorus, Student X followed the meter of this song very well. Initially, he struggled to stay in time due to his late breaths, and crippling anxiety. After a while, he was back in the right time.
<b>Tone Quality</b>	Student X showed great effort in tone quality. However, he needs to work on his breathing and shape of his vowels to achieve a clearer tone.
<b>Vocal Technique</b>	As a novice vocalist, Student X performed considerably well, vocally. However, there were a few downfalls to the performance. More often than not, he would belt the low voice up as high as it could reach. It doesn’t seem he comprehends the pertinence of staying connected to his breath, which affects his phrasing. He also locks his jaw causing his vowels to be unfocused.
<b>Posture / Physicality</b>	Student X’s posture is seamless, aside from the stiffness of his jaw. This can affect the alignment of his head, spine, neck and back. This needs to be addressed as soon as possible.
<b>Overall Performance</b>	Overall, Student X’s performance was enjoyable. His interpretation of Hercules was unique, and showcased his individualized singing. Our action items include: providing him with coping skills to combat his performance anxiety, work on his breath control, intonation, rhythmic nuances, vowel shapes, and positioning of his jaw.

The use of the Constructive Evaluation Elements Chart is such a supportive tool for both the instructor and the voice student, which makes the evaluation most effective. While analyzing Student X’s performance, I used the *Glows and Grows* approach in my notes, so when it is time to provide the feedback to him, I’ve already implemented the best practice in written form. I find it to be best practice to first provide glowing remarks or something he’s done well, followed by suggestions or areas of growth. For example, in reference to Student X’s pitch and intonation I could state, “I really enjoyed the consistency of his intonation during the introduction of the performance. Unfortunately, due to his shortness of breath, Student X’s intonation was not consistent throughout the remainder of the piece. However, I could sense his intense anxiety, which has contributed to the fallen pitch and shortness of breath.” Framing my comments with the use of a growth mindset approach assures that Student X knows that I am not attacking his artistry, but simply providing feedback to help his show growth and believe he can achieve his goals as well. To address the issue of his performance anxiety, I would provide Student X with tangible action steps he must take in order to successfully cope. See Table 1.1a below.

Table 1.1a – Coping with Performance Anxiety

<b>Action Steps</b>	To combat the performance anxiety that causes you to lose your breath and inaccurate intonation during performances, I would like to you try taking deep breaths; in slowly through your nose and out slowly through your mouth. This technique will help you to calm down, and slow the heart rate to a steadier pulse for singing.
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These techniques can be implemented during his wait time before a performance, and in between songs. Should Student X choose to follow these action items, he might find himself in a calmer state, and the precision in his intonation just might improve.

## **CHAPTER IV: FUNDAMENTALS OF TEACHING VOCAL MUSIC PERFORMANCE**

The general purpose of this instructional unit is for students to develop the fundamental techniques of their vocal performance skills, using professional constructive evaluation that will improve their overall performance. One of the most useful ways to promote the growth of music learners is to offer constructive evaluation of their performances. As a music teacher who is actively overseeing the development of students as performers, I include constructive evaluation as a standard part of my curriculum. The structure of this curriculum is broken into five charts: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, and Evaluation.

Part one of the Analysis Chart outlines the curriculum information such as required textbooks needed for the course, identified problems that students may endure, the targeted student demographic, desired student behavior, pedagogical considerations, and possible learning theories that may apply to the curriculum. Part two is a glimpse of the preferred learning outcomes according to Bloom's Taxonomy. The Design Chart evaluates the Analysis Chart and Learning Outcomes and adds a full twelve-week curriculum plan which includes praxial activities participating students. The Development Chart uses an expository, narrative, and graphic organizer as a pre-instructional strategy to prepare the students to link what they do know to what they do not know. The Implementation Chart is an evaluation and revision of the analysis, design, and development charts, alongside the Bloom's learning outcome. This section of the curriculum involves identifying all items and tasks that music be prepared before teaching the instructional lessons. Lastly, the Evaluation Chart describes the formative assessment plan for each learning outcome within the curriculum unit. Formative assessments are most effective when facilitated before a summative assessment to gauge each learner's grasp of the learning objective. Let's take a closer look at the break down of each chart.

**CURRICULUM PROJECT – ANALYSIS CHART - PART I: CURRICULUM INFORMATION**

<b>Instructor:</b> Malcolm S. Richardson	<b>Course Title:</b> Fundamentals of Teaching Vocal Music Performance
<p><b>Required Course Text:</b>                  Klickstein, G. <i>The Musician’s Way: A Guide to Practice, Performance, and Wellness</i>. Oxford, NY. Oxford University Press, 2009. ISBN-13: 978-0195343137 ISBN-10: 0195343131</p> <p>Bruser, M. <i>The Art of Practicing: A Guide to Making Music from The Heart</i>. The Crown Publishing Group, a division of Random House, Inc. New York, NY. Three Rivers Press, 1997.</p>	
<p><b>Identify the Problem:</b>                  What performance skills are the students lacking?                  What are the students gap in the training or experience?</p>	
<p><b>Students will be able to showcase vocal performances, observe vocal performances, and receive constructive evaluations, and provide self and peer evaluations using a constructive evaluation element chart.</b></p>	
<p><b>Who are the learners and what are their characteristics?</b>  <i>(Age, major, pre-requisites, residential, online, or a hybrid of the two)</i>                  Highschool Freshman, ages 14-16, in a Residential Performance-based Voice Studio Master Class. Pre-requisites: Must have performing experience, must have at least one Art Song, Musical Theater Song, Aria (English, Italian, German, French) prepared, Music be a Vocal Performance Major.</p>	
<p><b>What is the new desired behavior?</b>  <i>(Overall, what is the main change or new addition to the student’s demonstrated ability?)</i></p>	
<p><b>This course includes a number of techniques for creating positive, constructive evaluations, including:</b> Analyzing the Performance, Self &amp; Peer-Evaluations, <i>Glows and Grows</i>, Use of Fundamental Elements of Music, Solutions Oriented Feedback, and helping students develop coping skills for Performance Anxiety.</p>	
<p><b>What are the delivery options?</b> <i>(Explain the materials needed to develop the course.)</i>                  For this course, I have developed a Constructive Evaluation Element Chart to report all feedback and break down all the key elements each performer, peer and instructor should consider when evaluating performances.</p>	
<p><b>What are the pedagogical considerations?</b> <i>(Describe the general content and methodology.)</i>                  Together we will develop a job description for them as constructive evaluators. This step is important, because the students have to be aware of their purpose for providing and receiving constructive, critical, and professional evaluation. Depending on the advancement of the students, I may need to introduce or review these terms before distributing the element chart:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Pitch/Intonation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pitch defines the location of a tone in relation to others, thus giving it a sense of being high or low.<sup>24</sup></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

<sup>24</sup> Richard Cole, Ed Schwartz, Connect for Education, Inc., OnMusic Dictionary, (Virginia Tech Multimedia Music Dictionary, 1999). <https://dictionary.onmusic.org>

- Intonation is a term referring to the proper production of a tone that it is in tune.<sup>25</sup>
- **Rhythm**
  - Rhythm is the controlled movement of music in time. It may be defined as the division of music into regular metric portions; the regular pulsation of music<sup>26</sup>.
- **Accents / Articulations**
  - An accent is a stress or special emphasis on a beat to mark its position in the measure.<sup>27</sup>
  - Directions to a performer typically through symbols and icons on a musical score that indicate characteristics of the attack, duration, and decay of a given note<sup>28</sup>.
- **Diction/Text**
  - Diction is the style of enunciation expressed through speaking or singing.
  - What is the difference between enunciation and pronunciation?
    - ◆ Pronunciation is related to the word itself, focusing on which syllables should be emphasized and how certain letters should sound when spoken.
    - ◆ Enunciation refers to how clearly and distinctly a particular individual form the sounds that make up a word.
- **Dynamics**
  - Dynamics are the loudness or softness of a composition.<sup>29</sup>
- **Tempo**
  - Tempo is the speed of the rhythm of a composition.<sup>30</sup>
- **Tone Quality**
  - Tone quality is the particular sound of an instrument or voice, as well as the performer's particular coloring of that sound.<sup>31</sup>
- **Posture/Physicality**
  - Posture is the position in which we hold our bodies while standing, sitting, or lying down.

Before conducting evaluations, the students will have the opportunity to informally evaluate the teacher, and see how vocal music instructors evaluate their students.

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<sup>25</sup> Richard Cole, Ed Schwartz, Connect for Education, Inc., OnMusic Dictionary, (Virginia Tech Multimedia Music Dictionary, 1999). <https://dictionary.onmusic.org>

<sup>26</sup> Ibid

<sup>27</sup> Ibid

<sup>28</sup> Ibid

<sup>29</sup> Ibid

<sup>30</sup> Ibid

<sup>31</sup> Ibid

**What learning theory applies to your curriculum? Why?**

The learning theory that applies to this course is Constructivism. Constructivism involves learning being an active, contextualized process of constructing knowledge rather than acquiring it. The learner brings past experiences and cultural factors to a current situation and each person has a different interpretation and construction of the knowledge process.

**Part II: LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**By the end of the course, the students will be able to:**

1. Evaluate music performances using the Constructive Evaluation Element Chart
2. Organize their observational skills
3. Prepare evaluations on student performances using professional language, and feedback that highlights vocal techniques performed well, <i>Glow</i> s, and feedback that highlights areas of growth, <i>Grow</i> s.
4. Manage feedback of their performance skills given by peers, and instructor
5. Apply their given feedback to future performances

**CURRICULUM PROJECT – DESIGN CHART**

**I. Evaluate the Analysis Chart and Learning Outcomes and include a full twelve weeks of curriculum. Make sure that the Design Chart includes praxial activities.**

<b>Instructor:</b> Malcolm S. Richardson		<b>Course Title:</b> Fundamentals of Teaching Vocal Music Performance	
<b>Concept Statement:</b> <i>(The overall purpose and point of the instructional unit is for students learn how to identify quality performances, and provide professional constructive evaluations based on the Constructive Evaluation Element Chart)</i>			
<b>Learning Outcomes</b> <i>(List in the order of the 12-week plan)</i>	<b>Content</b> <i>(What must be learned to master the objective?)</i>	<b>Learning/Training Activity</b> <i>(How will the content be taught?)</i>	<b>Assessment</b> <i>(Evidence that proves each student mastered the given objective)</i>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Learning Outcomes Knowledge &amp; Comprehension</b>  Track feedback based on previously recorded performances	<b>Week 1</b>  1) Discuss the job description for a constructive evaluator. 2) Name every duty each evaluator will have to execute when providing feedback to each performer. 3) Identify the makings of a quality vocal performance. 4) Define the terms listed on the Constructive Evaluation Element Chart. 5) Track all feedback on the Constructive Evaluation Element Chart 6) State <i>Glows</i> and <i>Grows</i> for each element.	<b>Week 1</b>  Take a quick student poll. 1) How many students have watched The Four? 2) How many of students would like to be a Performance Evaluator for a day? 3) Tell students that they are going to work together to create a job description for a Performance Evaluator. 4) Ask the students, “What makes a quality vocal performance?” Depending on the advancement of the student’s responses, I may need to introduce or review the following terms: (Pitch, Intonation, Rhythm, Accents, Articulations, Diction, Text, Dynamics, Tempo, Tone Quality, Posture, and Physicality) 5) Distribute Constructive Evaluation Element Chart 6) Tell the students they are going to have an opportunity to practice evaluating pre-recorded performances.	<b>Week 1</b>  1) Are the students giving thorough and thoughtful evaluations? 2) Are the students displaying unprofessional language? 3) Are the students using both the constructive evaluation element chart appropriately? 4) Are the students recording feedback about the elements assessed on the chart?

	<p>7) Recall the musical terms assessed in each evaluation</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Week 2</b></p> <p>Analyzing the Performance</p> <p>Self &amp; Peer Evaluations</p> <p><i>Glows and Grows</i></p>	<p>8) Students should evaluate the singer using their chart and write notes about the performance.</p> <p>9) Students will come to the front of class in groups of 2 through 4.</p> <p>10) Chose a new performer for the students to observe. Give them time to record feedback, then have them speak about elements of the performance.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Week 2</b></p> <p>Focus on a recent performance or a piece prepared for a lesson.</p> <p>Feedback should be as immediate as possible - Giving feedback while it is fresh will ensure that the feedback is accurate, and that the student will have a clear memory of the performance that led to the feedback. If feedback cannot be immediate, take notes and offer it as soon as is reasonably possible.</p> <p>Separate personal preferences from generally-accepted practices.</p> <p>Encourage/teach/demonstrate self &amp; peer evaluation</p> <p>Beginning a critique with at least one positive comment acknowledges the student's efforts</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Week 2</b></p> <p>Depending on the type of class and age of students, I may need to pause the evaluation abruptly if a piece of feedback is offered “unprofessionally” or out of line</p> <p>Avoid comments about the performer’s current skill level.</p> <p>Include positive comments in every</p> <p>Be Honest not Cruel. Be specific not judgmental</p>
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<p><b>2<sup>nd</sup> Learning Outcome (Application)</b></p> <p>Use learned criteria to critique a live performance.</p>	<p><b>Weeks 3 - 5:</b></p> <p>1) Apply constructive evaluation skills to the University's Opera and Musical Theater performers.</p> <p>2) Practice giving written feedback using critics report sheet and rubric. Interpret the emotion of an Opera or Theater performer based on the singer's stage presence, and tone.</p> <p>3) Illustrate what the performer is doing to exude those emotions on stage using your critics report sheet.</p> <p>4) Demonstrate by evaluating the performers Pitch, Intonation, Rhythm, Accents, Articulations, Diction, Text, Dynamics, Tempo, Tone Quality, Posture, and Physicality.</p>	<p><b>Weeks 3 - 5:</b></p> <p>For three weeks, students will be visiting a mixture of Musical Theater and Opera performances on campus.</p> <p>Each day throughout the week, the students will have to critique a different singer in each show. For example:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="777 632 1240 816"> <thead> <tr> <th>Show</th> <th>Character</th> <th>Day</th> <th>Week</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>AIDA</td> <td>Mereb</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>AIDA</td> <td>Radames</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hairspr</td> <td>Tracy</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>The Wiz</td> <td>Aunt Em</td> <td>3</td> <td>5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>On Day 5 of each week, students will split into groups based on character evaluations. If you Evaluated Tracy, you're in a group, if you chose to evaluate Mereb, you're in a group, etc.</p>	Show	Character	Day	Week	AIDA	Mereb	1	3	AIDA	Radames	2	3	Hairspr	Tracy	4	4	The Wiz	Aunt Em	3	5	<p><b>Weeks 3 - 5:</b></p> <p>1) Are the students giving thorough and well thought out feedback?</p> <p>2) Are the students not displaying unprofessional behaviors?</p> <p>3) Are the students using both the evaluation chart appropriately?</p> <p>4) Are the students recording information about the performer's Pitch, Intonation, Rhythm, Accents, Articulations, Diction, Text, Dynamics, Tempo, Tone Quality, Posture, and Physicality in their written and verbal responses?</p> <p>5) Did students discuss the characters emotional growth throughout the show?</p>
Show	Character	Day	Week																				
AIDA	Mereb	1	3																				
AIDA	Radames	2	3																				
Hairspr	Tracy	4	4																				
The Wiz	Aunt Em	3	5																				

<p><b>3<sup>rd</sup> Learning Outcome (Analysis)</b></p> <p>Contrast the critiquing experience when evaluating the emotions presented in pre-recorded, musical theater, and opera performances.</p>	<p><b>Weeks 6 - 8:</b></p> <p>Compare the experience of evaluating a previously recorded performance to a live performance.</p> <p>Compare the experience of evaluating a theater performance to an opera performance.</p> <p>Interpret the emotion of an Opera or Theater performer based on the singer's stage presence, and tone.</p> <p>Illustrate what the performer is doing to exude those emotions on stage using your constructive evaluation element chart.</p> <p>Demonstrate your understanding the constructive evaluation element chart by evaluating the performers overall performance.</p>	<p><b>Weeks 6 - 8:</b></p> <p>For three weeks, students will be visiting a mixture of Musical Theater and Opera performances on campus.</p> <p>Each day throughout the week, the students will have to providing feedback for a different singer in each show.</p> <p>Previously Learned Criteria about feedback using the constructive evaluation element chart.</p>	<p><b>Weeks 6 - 8:</b></p> <p>Are the students giving thorough and well thought out feedback?</p> <p>Are the students not displaying unprofessional behaviors?</p> <p>Are the students using both the rubric and the element chart appropriately?</p> <p>Are the students recording information about the overall performance in their written and verbal responses?</p> <p>Did students discuss the characters emotional growth throughout the show?</p>
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<p><b>4<sup>th</sup> Learning Outcome (Synthesis)</b></p> <p>Prepare critiques for peer performances using the constructive evaluation element chart</p>	<p><b>Weeks 9 - 11:</b></p> <p>Prepare at least one Art Song, Musical Song, Aria (English, Italian, German, French)</p> <p>Compose a written feedback based on peer performances using the element chart.</p> <p>Assemble a verbal feedback based on peer performances using the element chart.</p> <p>Collect all the feedback given to you by your peers after you perform.</p>	<p><b>Weeks 9 - 11:</b></p> <p>Each student will be given the opportunity to perform a few pieces of the course of 3 weeks.</p> <p>They will use their prior knowledge of providing feedback on their peers using professional language.</p> <p>If necessary, I will review evaluation rules and regulations, feedback vocabulary, professional language, and Constructive Evaluator job descriptions.</p>	<p><b>Weeks 9 - 11:</b></p> <p>Are the students giving thorough and well thought out feedback?</p> <p>Are the students not displaying unprofessional behaviors?</p> <p>Are the students using the element chart appropriately?</p> <p>Are the students recording information about the overall performance in their written and verbal responses?</p> <p>Did students discuss the characters emotional growth throughout the show?</p>
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<p><b>5<sup>th</sup> Learning Outcome (Evaluation)</b></p> <p>Assess all aspects of performance feedback based on criteria learned over the past 12 weeks</p>	<p><b>Week 12</b></p> <p>Evaluate one performance (song chosen by peer audience)</p> <p>Compare week 9 performance to week 12's performance</p> <p>Measure the performers growth based collect feedback.</p>	<p><b>Week 12</b></p> <p>This is based on previously learned constructive evaluation criteria.</p>	<p><b>Week 12</b></p> <p>1) Are the students giving thorough and well thought out feedback?  2) Are the students using the element chart correctly?  3) Are the students recording information about the overall performance in their written and verbal responses?  4) Did students discuss the performer's emotional growth throughout the performance?  5) Did the performer demonstrate growth in his performance?</p>
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**I. Enter each learning outcome according to Bloom’s Taxonomy and describe why the sequence is most effective.**

<b>Learning Outcomes</b> <i>(List them in the order you plan to address during the 12 weeks of curriculum.)</i>	<b>Rational for Sequence</b> <i>(Describe why you believe this sequence is the most effective.)</i>
1. Provide feedback based on previously recorded performances	This sequence is the most effective as the first learning outcome because students are afforded the opportunity to practice a new skill right away, without the fear of evaluating too harshly.
2. Use learned criteria to provide feedback for a live performance.	I believe that analyzing live performances is an effective sequence because it is a more personal experience, where you get to connect to an actually live audience and the audience can connect to the performers and get a sense of the performer’s vocal style
3. Contrast the evaluation experience when evaluating the emotions presented in pre-recorded, musical theater, and opera performances.	It’s good to be able to understand the different aspects of constructive evaluations. All three experiences are completely different, and each one brings something unique out of the performers.
4. Prepare feedback for peer performances using the Constructive Evaluation Element Chart.	I find this sequence to be effective because there is a sense of community building in the classroom.
5. Assess all aspects of the vocal performance based on all criteria assessed on the Constructive Evaluation Element Chart over the past 12 weeks.	The students are presented with the opportunity to support their peer’s performance growth and be a significant cause of it all.

CURRICULUM PROJECT – DEVELOPMENT CHART

<p><b>Instructor:</b> Malcolm S. Richardson</p>	<p><b>Course Title:</b> Fundamentals of Teaching Vocal Music Performance</p>
<p><b>Expository</b> (You are verbally describing the new content you are about to cover; <i>enter below what you will say to the class as though it is in a script format</i>)</p>	
<p><b><u>Introduction:</u></b> Good afternoon scholars, before we begin our new unit, I want to turn your attention to today’s “DO NOW” activity. As you all know, DO NOW’s are to be completed silently and independently within 5 minutes. Should you have any questions, please write them on the index card provided to you and place it at the top right-hand corner of your desk. We will have time to answer those questions during the DO NOW Review. After the timer sounds you will have 30 seconds to finish your final thoughts. When I say, “Go,” you may begin. GO!</p> <p><b><u>DO NOW Review:</u></b> Pencils down in 5, 4, 3, 2, eyes on me in 1. By a show of hands, may I have 5 volunteers to answer one question from the DO NOW out loud? (Volunteers Selected) Question 1 is asking if you have ever seen performance competitive television shows like American Idol, or The Voice. If so what if the purpose of having judges on those show? If not, what do you believe is the main job of a judge? Question 2 asked, what makes for a quality performance? Questions 3 says, “Who are your some of your absolute favorite performing artist, and what about their performance skills make them your favorite. Question 4; “Were you a judge of singing competition, list four key elements of the performance that you value as most important? Question 5 asked, “As a performing artist/voice student, what critiques do you look forward to from your instructors to help mold your performing technique?</p> <p><b><u>Transition:</u></b> Now that our DO NOW Review is complete, we shall begin our lesson for today.</p>	
<p><b>Narrative</b> (You are presenting the new information in a story format; enter below what you will do or say.)</p>	
<p><b><u>Take a Poll:</u></b> By a show of hands, how many students have seen the television show <i>The Four</i>? (Students will raise their hands) Based on our newly found knowledge of competition judges and performance critiques, who would like to be a Critic for the day? (Students will raise their hands)</p> <p><b><u>Job Description:</u></b> I will tell my scholars that we are going to work to develop a job description for a Performance Evaluator. What are the main duties of a performance evaluator? (Using the smartboard, I will ask students to share their thoughts.)</p>	

**Quality Performance: I will ask the students, “What makes for a quality vocal performance?” Depending on the advancement of the students, I may need to introduce or review the following terms:**

***Pitch/Intonation***

Pitch defines the location of a tone in relation to others, thus giving it a sense of being high or low.<sup>32</sup>

Intonation is a term referring to the proper production of a tone that it is in tune.<sup>33</sup>

**I will inform my students that I am going to sing a song and they should raise their hands when you start to sing out of tune. I will demonstrate by singing “Twinkle, twinkle little star.” Half way through the song, I will start singing the song in a different key. My students should raise their hands to show they heard the center of the key switch.**

***Rhythm***

Rhythm is the controlled movement of music in time. It may be defined as the division of music into regular metric portions; the regular pulsation of music<sup>34</sup>.

***Accents / Articulations***

An accent is a stress or special emphasis on a beat to mark its position in the measure.<sup>35</sup>

Directions to a performer typically through symbols and icons on a musical score that indicate characteristics of the attack, duration, and decay of a given note<sup>36</sup>.

***Diction / Text***

Diction is the style of enunciation expressed through speaking or singing.

**Enunciation and Pronunciation are often misconstrued when discussing diction. I will explain the differences.**

**Students will be asked...**What is the difference between enunciation and pronunciation? Pronunciation is related to the word itself, focusing on which syllables should be emphasized and how certain letters should sound when spoken. Enunciation refers to how clearly and distinctly a particular individual form the sounds that make up a word.

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<sup>32</sup> Richard Cole, Ed Schwartz, Connect for Education, Inc., OnMusic Dictionary, (Virginia Tech Multimedia Music Dictionary, 1999). <https://dictionary.onmusic.org>

<sup>33</sup> Ibid

<sup>34</sup> Ibid

<sup>35</sup> Ibid

<sup>36</sup> Ibid

### ***Dynamics***

Dynamics are the loudness or softness of a composition.<sup>37</sup>

### ***Tempo***

Tempo is the speed of the rhythm of a composition.<sup>38</sup>

### ***Tone Quality***

Tone quality is the particular sound of an instrument or voice, as well as the performer's particular coloring of that sound.<sup>39</sup>

**I will demonstrate by singing with a squeaky voice, raspy voice, unclear voice**

### ***Posture / Physicality***

Posture is the position in which we hold our bodies while standing, sitting, or lying down.

**I will demonstrate the appropriate posture and physicality for singing.**

**The Constructive Evaluation Chart: Students, during this unit we will have the opportunity to provide feedback based on the criteria listed on the Constructive Evaluation Chart. May I have two scholars pass out these charts (Students pass them out for review.)**

**Group / Independent Practice: I will tell my students they are going to have a practice opportunity as a performance evaluator using pre-recorded episodes of The Four on YouTube. I will play a clip of a contestant performing. Students should provide feedback the singer using their evaluation charts and write notes about the performance discussing the performance elements listed on the chart. Students will come to the front of class in groups of 3 or 4. I will choose a new performer for the evaluators to listen. Give evaluators time to write notes then provide feedback in their chosen order.**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yzfj98Q1HGA>  
(Zhavia 1:00)**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jycDJ6hjiYY>  
(Zhavia vs Elanese 1:40)**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-WhOID4ZNZk>  
(Leah Jenea' 2:15)**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=adpMVc3Ebeg>**

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid

<sup>38</sup> Richard Cole, Ed Schwartz, Connect for Education, Inc., OnMusic Dictionary, (Virginia Tech Multimedia Music Dictionary, 1999). <https://dictionary.onmusic.org>

<sup>39</sup> Ibid

**New rule:** students may NOT repeat the same feedback as the preceding evaluator. They must simply comment on something different about the performance.

**Teachable Moment:** Depending on the type of class and age of students, I may need to stop the evaluation abruptly if a student says something “unprofessionally” or out of line (example: “That boy looks ugly!” “She sings awfully!”) This type of feedback is not constructive or applicable to whether the singer has adequate Performance skills based on the criteria. I will have students focus on “why” the performer is quality or not.

**Lesson Wrap Up/Exit Ticket:** In written form, I will have students reflect on the experience of evaluating others. Was it difficult? Did they enjoy it? Why or why not? Students will turn this in as they exit.

**Graphical Organizers**

(You are presenting an original visual pictograph, chart, or concept pattern.) Describe the visual below and then copy and paste your original graphic.

**Below you shall find the Constructive Evaluation Element Chart that my students will be using to provide feedback for each performer. The main reason I have charged them with this skill is to help them use professional language when discussing the vocal performance abilities of others, as well as using the feedback they receive from their peers to help develop their own vocal performance skills.**

**The Constructive Evaluation Element Chart is sectioned into ten rows and 2 columns. Column one list each music element being assessed, and each element has a corresponding section to record feedback for the performer.**

Constructive Evaluation Element Chart	
ELEMENT	COMMENT
Pitch / Intonation	
Rhythm	
Accents / Articulations	
Diction / Text	
Dynamics	
Tempo	
Tone Quality	
Vocal Technique	
Posture / Physicality	
Overall Performance	

## Gagne's Nine Events of Instruction

<b>Instruction Event</b>	Describe how each instructional event will be addressed in your instructional unit. Cite a reference from your text as to why this approach will be effective.
<b>1. Gain attention</b>	I will start each class with a DO NOW activity. This will ensure that my scholars are ready to learn and participate in activities by presenting a stimulus to gain intellectual readiness. (Nilson)
<b>2. Inform learners of objectives</b>	I will inform students of the objectives and learning outcomes to help them understand what they are to learn during the lesson. These objectives will be provided before instruction begins. (Nilson)
<b>3. Stimulate recall of prior learning</b>	These stimuli help students make sense of new information by relating it to something they already know or something they have already experienced. In this case we will execute group and independent practices based on critiquing performances using pre-recorded episodes on The Four on YouTube. (Regelski)
<b>4. Present the content</b>	I will use strategies to present and cue lesson content to provide more effective, efficient instruction. I must organize and chunk the content in a meaningful way, while providing explanations after demonstrations. I have done this by presenting vocabulary, providing examples, using multiple versions of the same content (videos & group work), and the use of a variety of media to address my students different learning preferences. (Nilson)
<b>5. Guide learning</b>	I will provide instructional support as needed; such as scaffolds (cues, hints, prompts) which can be removed after the student learns the task or content. (Regelski)
<b>6. Elicit performance (practice)</b>	Independent/Group Practices: Activate student processing to help them internalize the new skills and knowledge and to confirm correct understanding of these concepts. (Nilson)
<b>7. Provide feedback</b>	Help students integrate new knowledge by providing real-world examples. (Nilson)
<b>8. Assess performance</b>	In order to evaluate the effectiveness of the instructional events, I must test to see if the expected learning outcomes have been achieved. Performance should be based on previously stated objectives. (Regelski)
<b>9. Enhance retention and transfer</b>	To help learners develop expertise, they must internalize new knowledge. (Regelski)

**CURRICULUM PROJECT – IMPLEMENTATION CHART – PART I**

<b>Instructor:</b> Malcolm S. Richardson	<b>Course Title:</b> Fundamentals of Teaching Vocal Music Performance
<b>Physical Item</b>	Rationale for Use, Cite a reference from your text for each item indicating its effectiveness
<b>Smartboard</b>	This Smart Board contains an overhead projector that will allow me to display items of study in a direct teaching setting. An overhead projector displays on a screen only what is a transparency while a document projector, a much newer technology, displays whatever is on a piece of paper. (Nilson)
<b>PowerPoint</b>	In the PowerPoint presentation students can visually see the concept that will be learned and attain during this course. Students will also see the common misconceptions about the given topic. These documents will be printable for students at their desire. Presentation like PowerPoint can enhance the visual quality and impact of lectures and professional presentations. (Nilson)
<b>Performance Theatre/Auditorium</b>	This course will predominantly take place in the auditorium/performance theatre, but we will be using the traditional classroom setting. Mixing up the classroom give the educator options to switch activities from direct instruction, to learning center, and groups activities. You may want to build a variety of opportunities for students to board the learning cycle (Nilson)
<b>Pre-recorded Music Performances</b>	All student will be given and assignment that demonstrate the technique of providing performance critiques. This approach will give students that are aesthetic an opportunity to continue to be involved in the expressing of themselves. (Van Brummelen)
<b>Portable Notebook w/writing utensils</b>	Students will write about predetermined topics for a brief, specified number of minutes as fast as they can think and put words on paper. This free-writing activity serves as effective in-class warm-up exercises that will help students recall previous class meetings and assigned readings a presentation. (Nilson)  Students will also summarize what they are learning or how they are reacting, cognitively and emotionally, to the lectures, discussions, readings, laboratories, homework, presentations, and other written assignments. (Nilson)
<b>Constructive Evaluation Element Chart</b>	All students will be given and assignment that demonstrate that creativity about all of the critiquing skills we will have studied. This active learning approach will give my students, that are aesthetic, an opportunity to continue to be involved in the expressing of themselves.(Van Brummelen)

**Part II: List at least 6 necessary tasks and provide a rationale (e.g., jobs to be done in advance, such as arranging chairs in a specific formation, photocopying, etc.).**

<b>Task</b>	Rationale for Task, Cite a reference from your text for each task indicating its effectiveness
<b>Configure the projector to the Smart Board</b>	The projector or camera must out of clear reach of all students. The contain in which show must be visible to all students. The use of multi colored pens are very useful, and show be used at all times. Never stand between the projector and the projected images. (Nilson)
<b>Design the PowerPoint</b>	The PowerPoint presentation is a tool that can reach students of multiple intelligences especially visual learners. It allows you to create and project text integrated with images, and animations. (Nilson)
<b>Arrange my classroom/theatre</b>	Students with different learning abilities to well with collaborative learning and having groups for instructor is a great to build strategies that can be transferred into the real world. Teacher began to use collaborative learning; this is a crucial one for the welfare of persons and for society. (Van Brummelen)
<b>Select pre-recorded performance</b>	The classroom is arranged in a setting where all attention is on them. They also been given a rubric of the presentation. This assignment will use a speaker system so that students will be heard across the classroom. A technology may help achieve certain course goals and facilitate certain instructional tasks that are impossible to accomplish otherwise. (Nilson)
<b>Purchase Portable Notebooks w/writing utensils</b>	The students should have a special notebook, blog, wiki, or word-processing file solely for their journal. I will collect and check off journals regularly or intermittently but need not grade them. (Nilson)
<b>Print Evaluation Chart</b>	Have more than enough copy of the given materials, limit long note and include more student driven instruction. Organize your notes according to the instructor’s introductory, transitional, and phrases. (Nilson)

**CURRICULUM PROJECT – EVALUATION CHART**

<b>Instructor:</b> Malcolm S. Richardson	<b>Course Title:</b> Fundamentals of Teaching Vocal Music Performance	
<b>Learning Outcomes</b>	<b>Your Formative Assessment Plan</b>	<b>Rationale for Formative Assessment Type</b> <i>(Describe why you believe this assessment is the most effective and cite a reference from your text for support)</i>
1. Record feedback based on previously recorded performances	Inquiry Based Formative Assessment <sup>40</sup>	I believe that this formative assessment will be effective because, these questions will be posed to individual students and groups of students during the learning process to determine what specific concepts or skills they may be having trouble with in reference to their written expression skills. I will provide a wide variety of intentional questioning strategies such as phrasing questions in specific ways to elicit more useful responses.
2. Use learned criteria to evaluate a live performance.	Exit Tickets <sup>41</sup>	Exit tickets quickly collect student responses to my inquiries at the end of a class period. Based on what the responses indicate, I will then modify the next lesson to address concepts that students have yet to comprehend or skills they may be struggling with. These exit tickets are written assessments.
3. Contrast the feedback experience when evaluating the emotions presented in pre-recorded, musical theater, and opera performances.	Debate <sup>42</sup>	The use of debating as a means of learning is a very innovative formative assessment. Debates will enable my students to develop key skills in terms of rapid response, one to one communication, answering difficult questions and discussing issues in a professional manner. The objective of the debates is to discuss, evaluate and quantify issues related to two sustainable development topics, and to communicate in a professional manner in a debating forum.
4. Prepare professional evaluations for peer performances using the Constructive Evaluation Element Chart	Peer-assessment <sup>43</sup>	Allowing my scholars to undergo peer assessments enables them to use one another as learning resources. My students will follow the rubric and guidelines provided by me to evaluate their peer’s performances.

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<sup>40</sup> Great Schools Partnership, The Glossary of Education Reform: Formative Assessments, 2014, Portland, ME. Retrieved from <https://www.edglossary.org/formative-assessment/>

<sup>41</sup> Ibid

<sup>42</sup> Ibid

<sup>43</sup> Ibid

5. Assess all elements of performance by providing feedback on all criteria learned over the past 12 weeks	Self-assessment <sup>44</sup>	The use of a self-assessment will permit me to ask my students to think about their own learning process, to reflect on what they do well or struggle with, and to articulate what they have learned or still need to learn to meet course expectations or learning standards.
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**Part II: Evaluation and Reflection**

<b>Issue/Strategy</b>	<b>Rationale for Changing</b>
<b>1. The Appropriate use of the Chart</b>	Assuming that none of my students have previously used a chart to provide feedback to their peers, I predict that students will struggle with appropriately using the chart, even after the explanation. I believe that after a few practices, the scholars will become masters at using the chart by the time we begin to evaluate peer performances.
<b>2. The use of Written Expression</b>	Based on the academic levels in which my current students stand, I believe they will have a hard time with successfully expressing their feedback in written form. They will need a vocabulary preview prior to writing prompts, even a writer’s checklist, graphic organizers, and a rubric to assist them during the writing process.
<b>3. The use of Professional Language</b>	Young and inexperienced students, in particular, may not be able to tell, without help, which types of efforts are producing the desired results. Specific praise can help keep comments honest and when it is used with professional remarks, it makes the experience much more worth wild for the person receiving the feedback.
<b>4. The use of Verbal Expression</b>	It is easy to write something down, but to verbally express your thoughts is not as easy. Effective communication causes productivity to increase, errors to decrease and operations to run smoother, in this case, vocal performances.
<b>5. Following the Syllabus</b>	My syllabus is currently not in good condition in reference to the layout, and quality of information. I need to make the necessary edits to promote clarity and concision.
<b>6. Implementing Feedback based on peer-critiques and formative assessments provided by the instructor</b>	Students have the tendency to take their feedback very personal, causing them to not value the feedback. This will keep them from working on the parts covered in their evaluation. It is important for the students too feel safe when receiving feedback to make the implementation process run a look more smoothly.

## CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Fundamentals of Teaching Vocal Music Performance Curriculum serves a wide range of diverse high school vocalists who have a desire to develop their performance stamina and skills, and cope with their performance anxiety. During the process of this course, students will benefit from the feedback provided through their instructor's facilitation of constructive evaluation. The implementation of constructive evaluation is to reflect upon what is being done well, discover areas of improvement or refinement, plan and facilitate important lessons, and apply the lessons to future performances.

Constructive Evaluations are very pertinent to the vocal performance learning experience as the feedback helps to shape each student's vocal ability based on their individualized needs. Students who take this course will have the opportunity to prepare evaluations on pre-recorded performances using professional language, and feedback that highlights vocal techniques performed well, *Glows*, and feedback that highlights areas of growth, *Grows*, using their Constructive Evaluation Elements Chart. This procedure gives them a first-hand glimpse on how constructive evaluations are initiated, so further down the line when it is their turn to receive real-time feedback the students will already know what elements of their performances will be assessed by their peers and instructor, and what learning outcomes should be expected.

The most important learning outcomes that students should expect to achieve include: having the ability to manage feedback of their performance skills given by peers and instructor, and applying any given feedback to their future performance. More often than not, vocalists experience severe performance anxiety, and throughout this course, my students will learn various coping skills to combat the severity of their anxiety. One important thing to consider is that the performance anxiety is not the barrier that prevents vocalists from achieving their

performance goals. Not having the appropriate coping strategies is the barrier.

In Dr. Keith Currie's "Fire under Control: Performance Anxiety Coping Skills" seminar, performance anxiety is compared to fire. He declared that, "in the furnace, in the fireplace, and on a stove, fire is useful because it is under control. But if fire gets out of control, it can burn the house down!" Also, Dr. Noa Kageyama's "Positive Mental Practice" research teaches how to beat performance anxiety and sing their best under pressure through live classes, coaching, and online home-study courses. Much like fire, if a vocalist lacks control, the performance will go down in flames. The Fundamentals of Teaching Vocal Music Performance Curriculum utilizes constructive evaluation as a positive resource for the development of effective vocal performance, and provides tips on the best coping strategies to use when experiencing anxiety before and during a performance, which supports the relevance of both Currie and Kageyama's methodologies.

As high school student takes their gift of vocal performance more seriously, and their skills become more defined, I recommend that each student continues to seek feedback from a trusted instructor. Furthermore, when performance anxiety resurfaces, it is important that each vocalist follow the recommended coping strategies that work best for them. To quote Performance Psychologist, Dr. Noa Kageyama, performance anxiety, "is not a talent issue, and that rush of adrenaline and emotional rollercoaster you experience before performance is totally normal too." Nevertheless, when you are experiencing a high level of stress, and your performance anxiety is "through the roof" do not hesitate to close your eyes and breathe for 60 seconds. Inhale deeply through your nose, and exhale through your mouth. Allow any tension to escape your body. Visualize how you want to see yourself perform on stage. Make this vision as vivid as possible and create the positive performance environment you need. You're in control!

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