

Forward Voice Placement

Definitions:

Vocal Placement: Refers to the place in the vocal tract where the sound is *felt* through vibration.

Resonance: How & where the sound of your voice vibrates in your body. Resonance is what amplifies the voice and gives it fullness and richness

The “Sweet Spot” for Voice

- A forward placement of voice (forward resonance) is highly encouraged during speech as it helps project the voice, reduce vocal fry and encourages clear production of the vowels.
- Forward resonance produces a feeling of vibration in the front of the mouth, specifically in the bone the top four front teeth are inserted (maxilla).

Vocal Tract Alignment:

Chin is level

Lips gently touching

Jaw is relaxed so there is space between your upper and lower back teeth

Back of the tongue is low and flat in the mouth

Neck and throat muscles relaxed

Finding Forward Resonance

- 1) Take a breath in and on the exhale, as if you are agreeing with someone, say *mm-hmm*
- 2) Repeat. Bring awareness to the bone in which your four upper teeth are inserted—the bone between your nose and upper lip. Aim to feel a vibration in that bone.
- 3) Next, say *hmmm* (arcing the sound). Allow the pitch to start high and glide down. Intention is to feel vibration in the maxilla (and upper lip —that’s good too)
- 4) Now take a breath and sustain *mmm* at a comfortable pitch.
- 5) Repeat. This time, say you sustain *mmm*, gently allow your jaw to open and close and allow your tongue to explore different positions in your mouth

Reminder: Check to make sure the tongue back is low

To Find Forward Vowels:

Take a breath and make a steady *mmm* sound, feeling the vibration in the bone above your lip. Then, open up to the sound *mum*. Do this several times in a row like this:

mmm-mum, mum, mum, mum, mum

Repeat with the following sequences. On each *m* sound, feel the vibration strongly.

mmm-mim, mim, mim, mim, mum

mmm-mohm, mohm, mohm, mohm, mohm

mmm-mam, mam, mam, mam, mam

mmm-maim, maim, maim, maim, maim

mmm-mem, mem, mem, mem, mem

mmm-mom, mom, mom, mom, mom

*The goal is to sustain forward placement of the vowel as you move from *m* at the beginning of the word to *m* at the end*

Feeling N

Take a breath and say *nn-hnn* (same as *mm-hmm* but with an *n* sound). Feel the vibration in the front of the mouth - in the bone between your nose and lip.

-Now, make a steady *nnn* sound, feeling the same vibration.

-Then, open up to the following vowel sequences. On each *n* sound, feel the strong vibration.

nnn-nun, nun, nun, nun, nun

nnn-nin, nin, nin, nin, nin

nnn-nohn, nohn, nohn, nohn, nohn

nnn-nan, nan, nan, nan, nan

nnn-nain, nain, nain, nian, nain

nnn-nen, nen, nen, nen, nen

nnn-non, non, non, non, non

Forward Resonance Focus:

Say the following words while maintaining a feeling of open vowels and forward vibration:

1. me new
2. moo neigh
3. my no
4. may nay
5. maw naw
6. mom mean
7. men mine
8. man moo
9. line vine
10. noon main
11. moon mine

Apply the same forward placement to the following word combinations:

1. many mailman
2. Molly movement
3. namely migraine
4. no one young man
5. monkey wowie
6. marine nine men
7. minute win one
8. Nemo lemon
9. mermaid movie
10. merman narrow
11. moaning maintain
12. measure many
13. ninety more wine
14. nine million medieval
15. marshmallow musical
16. mail one million memos
17. my lawn mower magazine
18. win nine million more
19. medium lemon lamb
20. No
 No one
 No one knew
 No one knew my name
 No one knew my name in Maine
 No one knew my name in Maine in May

Forward Focus: Phrases

Read through the following phrases.

- 1) The first time through, sustain the *m* or *n* to train the forward vibration. Then chant the entire phrase while maintaining that vibration. (chant on one pitch - no intonation)
- 2) The second time through, say the phrase with normal inflection focusing on feeling vibration in the maxilla with every *m* or *n* sound.

Phrases:

1. My momma made lemon jam
2. Mary moved to Memphis
3. Mark and Mona were mad at me
4. Marge made a mountain of money in Nebraska
5. Meet me in my room tomorrow at noon.
6. When I came home, my mom made me move my many marbles.
7. Nana munches on lemon melons.
8. I missed Mike at the movie this morning.
9. My maid is messy.
10. Mary loves lemon meringue pies.

11. Come home with me to Memphis this summer.
12. Meg's mother is monotonous.
13. Michelle's market sells lemons, melon, jam and moonshine.
14. Mayor Mike roamed around the mall.
15. Morton's team will meet Megan's team on Monday.
16. Morning sun in the morning in Maine.

Forward Focus: Paragraph

Speak the following paragraph while keeping forward vibration:

Many times a year Mary's mom makes muffins. These muffins tend to be mushy and, therefore, pretty messy. You need a napkin when you eat them. Muffins are made with many ingredients including milk, sugar and butter. When you buy the milk, make sure it does not smell sour.