

VOCAL PREP MODULE 3 Melodic scale degrees and articulation

(Video: MV Vocal Prep Module 3 AF)

Warmups for your voice: Vocalising on different vowels across your vocal range

Exercise: Starting at a comfortable pitch in your lower register:

- MI-U-MI-U-mi-mi-mi (scale degree 1-5) MI-U-MI-U-mi-mi-mi (scale degree 5-9)
- MI-U-MI-U-mi-mi-mi (scale degree 9-5) MI-U-MI-U-mi-mi-mi (scale degree 5-1)
- 'ng' octave siren (scale degree 1-8)
- Ensure the placement of vowels is focused and forward 'in the nose' - this might sound more nasal in colour. Use the initial 'm' to place the note on the correct pitch - slow down the exercise and elongate the voiced 'm' to check you're not scooping the initial pitches
- Step up one semitone and repeat exercise on incrementally higher starting pitches 4-5 times
- Ensure the individual parts of the exercise are connected as one gesture (even though you're taking 'snatch' or top up breaths)
- Keep the vocal approach *leggiero* (light) and *mp* in dynamic and control the placement of the *staccato* 'mi's - ensure you're keeping the execution of the exercise as controlled, smooth and even as possible
- As you approach the top of your range don't strain the voice by forcing the production of the vocal tone, don't lift your head to reach the higher notes. If your voice naturally wants to change into falsetto, allow it to do so

Questions:

- How do we modify the sound/approach in our upper register?
- Repeat exercise going down incrementally stepping down a semitone until you reach your original starting pitch.

Variation: We have only sung this exercise as a major scale. Explore how this may work as minor exercise i.e. the 3rd note (scale degree 3) sounds sad

Questions:

- Did your way of singing vary?
- Is it harder to sing it as a minor?
- Did your intonation get better or worse?

Variation: Across the incremental steps try changing the vowel:

- MI-E-MI-E-mi-mi-mi, MI-A-MI-A-mi-mi-mi, MI-O-MI-O..., MI-U-MI-U...
- Ensure the other vowels are forward focused, bright and clear, and the mouth shape is relaxed (relaxed jaw) and vertical (not spread and horizontal in shape)

➤ Singing on words: "Bubble gum in my tum"

- Sustain this phrase on one note (starting low in your range) and connect the consonants with the vowels stretching it out like a big rubber band or piece of bubble gum!
- Step up a note and repeat the same phrase on one sustained note. Remember to support the sound with your breath and take a big enough breath before the phrase and use a consistent flow of air across the phrase.

Variation: Sing "Bubble gum in my tum" across the notes of a scale (scale degrees 1-8)

Try singing this with different articulations:

- a smooth (legato) scale
- a short (staccato) scale

VOCAL PREP MODULE 4 **Learning and Practicing a Song**
(Video: MV Vocal Prep Module 4 AF)

Melodic Exploration: "My Bonny lies over the ocean"

- Learning the melody phrase by phrase
- Speaking the words and feeling the shape of the words in your mouth

My bonny lies over the ocean, my bonny lies over the sea,
My bonny lies over the ocean, so bring back my bonny to me.
Bring back, bring back, o bring back my bonny to me,
Bring back, bring back, o bring back my bonny to me.

Exercise: Tongue roll or lip trill the melody and allow the air to flow freely

Questions:

- Can to get through all the phrases without running out of breath?
- Are you taking a deep enough breath before each phrase? Initial intake of breath should be half the length of the first phrase, say 2 sec intake.

Exercise: Sing the melody on 'doo' checking all your intonation
Sing the melody again on 'ng'

Questions:

- Is it easier to sing on 'ng'?
 - Can you sense the extra buzzing in your nose?
- Sing the melody on the words and accentuate all consonant opportunities - slow the tempo to explore how you can particularly elongate the voiced consonants by sustaining their pitch

Task: Underline all the moments you would elongate consonant opportunities

My bonny lies over the ocean, my bonny lies over the sea, ... , so bring back my bonny to me.

Record yourself doing a version of this i.e. elongating every consonant opportunity

- Sing the melody normally but with an added awareness of the consonants