

Vocal Exploration



Strong voices build confidence

In our Alberta curriculum, our youngest learners explore their voices, increase their ability to attend to sounds, experience a steady beat, and move safely and appropriately to music. Then, through spiral learning, lower primary builds on these foundations of singing, listening, rhythm and movement, while upper primary students synthesize all eight elements of music in their compositions, music theory studies, listening, and classroom performances (percussion, recorders, ukuleles, vocals).

For vocal exploration, brand new Preparatory students giggle their way through tongue twister “Toe-di-diddle dum”, chanting the aspiratead consonants and then putting them to music. To facilitate finding their singing voices, children can play with their voices with their parents at home to imitate a mosquito buzz, yawn with a sigh, and make sirens. Even our Grade 6 music students use these vocal warm-ups as the whole grade prepares for their solo singing of “Angels We Have Heard on High”.

Back to Prep...with “My Little Rooster” students also create various animal sounds, and the rooster that does a high and long “cock-a-doodle-do” with a flowing scarf, encouraging an unrestricted singing voice with a beautiful, dropped jaw. Students delight in scarf dances which develop aspects of slow, graceful, movements through space while crossing the mid-line. Through scarf dances students enhance their neural connections, body awareness, and sensory modulation. Singing games, music and movement like “Rig-a-jig-jig” are joyful shared activities, and students’ interpersonal skills are enriched through collaboration.

Each music class in each grade offers varied learning opportunities. One small, yet significant portion of all the rich musical education experienced is our concert preparation. Concerts are a very special opportunity for parents to catch a glimpse of the power of joyful music making in a child’s life. Over the years, students develop their confidence as they perform and sing on stage.

Vocal exploration is just the beginning; yet it is not JUST a beginning, for healthy vocal use is a lifelong skill. Classroom singing develops personal confidence, courageous action, attentive listening, breath control, and, of course, proper vocal use. In their future, students will use their voices in their family, friendships, hobbies and work, so students who can learn to use their voices appropriately and confidently now can reduce the effect that poor vocal habits can have on future physical fatigue, anxiety with public speaking, or even insecurity in networking or conversation.

And so, our primary students at CAIS begin their lifelong discovery of their voices in our nurturing music classroom.