

# WARM UP TO PRACTICE MATCHING TARGET VOWEL SOUNDS

Referenced from Jim Henry's *Singlish: Word Sounds, Not Words* IES 2008

See his handout on SAI/Education/Voice for additional information

[https://sweetadelines.com/sites/default/files/Education/Seminar%20Handouts/Singlish-Word-Sounds-Not-Words\\_Henry2008.pdf](https://sweetadelines.com/sites/default/files/Education/Seminar%20Handouts/Singlish-Word-Sounds-Not-Words_Henry2008.pdf)

## Target Vowel Sounds:

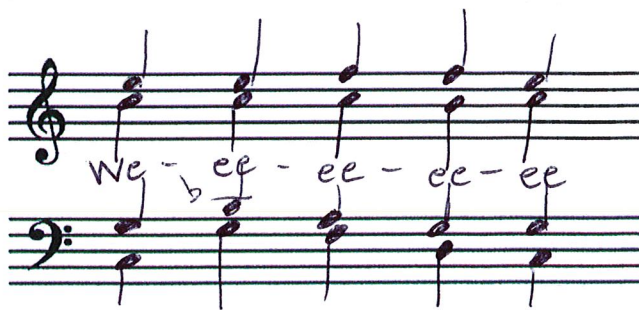
| Round (small to tall):   | Square (small to tall):   |
|--|---|
| OŌ [u] (soon, food, you)<br>OO [ʊ] (full, stood, book, could)<br>schwa [ə] (unstressed syllables: trumpet, angel)<br>ER [ɜ] (word, her, bird)<br>OH [o] (go, foal, boat)<br>AW [ɔ] (gone, fall, soft) | EE [i] (feel, see, weep)<br>IH [ɪ] (sit, bill, win)<br>EH [ɛ] (let, send, when)<br>Ä [æ] (hand, man, sat)<br>UH [ʌ] (sun, hush, love)<br>AH [ɑ] (father, hot, light, brown) |

### PRACTICE WORDS FOR SOUND MATCHING EXERCISE

|              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| WE – ee      | GIRL – ur (urge) |
| SIT - ih     | MOON – oo        |
| LET – eh     | MUTE – oo        |
| LATE – a-ee  | LOOK – oo        |
| JAZZ – a     | GO – oh-oo       |
| SPOT – ah    | JOY – oh-ee      |
| HIGH – ah-ee | LAW-ah-oo        |
| LOVE – uh    | CROWN -ah        |

### SAMPLE EXERCISE

1. Sing 'We- We- We' in unison
2. Sing 'We – ee' in unison octave scale ↓
3. We – ee (4 part see below)



4. Substitute all the above words to practice vowel matching. Listen to each other. When in doubt, sing with a taller vowel and adjust the placement to match your lead. Match timber and resonance. Lock, ring and enjoy!
5. You can also try a word in a current rep song that may not be matching or not ringing or that has two syllables so you can practice turning the dipthong together.

## CONSONANTS

Sing the following lyric from the song “Just the Way You Look Tonight” on a single note (or use the melody if you know it):

Someday when I’m awfully low,  
When the world is cold,  
I will feel a glow just thinking of you  
Just the way you look tonight.

Now sing it without any consonant sounds. Pretty unsatisfying, isn’t it? Without consonants no one would be able to understand a word we are singing. Sing it again with loud consonants. You can understand the words now, but there’s still something missing. This time sing it with emotional consonants. Sing the f in *awfully* with the feeling of sadness that the lyric conveys. Communicate the cold loneliness on the c in the word *cold*. Ah, but things are about to get better—bring love to the f in *feel* and warmth to the gl in *glow*. This is the real value of consonants—they convey the emotion of the lyric. This is how you create art.

Some consonant sounds, like *v*, *zh*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *ng*, and *sh* can be sustained. I call these singable consonants. This can be extremely helpful in bringing emotion to the text, because some of them, particularly the *m*, *n*, and *ng* can be quite beautiful and evocative when given a little length. Sing the lyric again, and pour emotion into the m in *someday*, and the n in *when the world* and the ng in *thinking*. Such depth and intensity of meaning can be found in emotional consonants.

### RULES ABOUT CONSONANTS

- Always sing emotional consonants.
- Consonants that precede a target vowel must always be sounded a split second before the point of the note so that the target vowel sounds at that point.
- Always sing a starting consonant on the correct note. Imagine doing this even with unvoiced consonants. This will help you to avoid scooping into the note.
- Like the secondary vowel of a diphthong, the singable consonants *l*, *m*, *n*, and *ng* should be given increased intensity in order to match the volume of the target vowels. (🙄 The key is to not show your work or effort to create this sound...)
- Always keep your consonants up in front. Avoid swallowing them.