

Three Vocal Warm-Ups to Create a Performance-Friendly Atmosphere

Counting Game

- Loudly count “1, 2, 3, 4” while flicking outstretched hands toward the floor as if you are stretching the muscles in your forearms.
- Repeat exercise with one hand at a time, then with each foot and back again several times.
- This exercise loosens lips and vocal cords for better read-alouds.
- It also loosens up the body and breaks the ice. (And it’s fun!)

Catch that Sound

- Using the sound of the word *those* as a ball, play a large group game of “catch.”
- Every player in the group must catch the sound and throw the sound.
- The sound may change shape, weight, temperature, and so forth, as it is thrown, and the person throwing the sound has to convey that quality or characteristic.
- Explain this changing ball to the group, conveying some of the possibilities ... and then let it go.

Pick a line, any line

- Tell students to pick a line of the poem and repeat it as they walk around the room in character. Indicate that their posture, demeanor, and vocal qualities will change as you become this character.
- You might show them an example from the poem or from any popular film.
- One example of a line that evokes the character immediately might be from the Pixar film, *Toy Story 2* in which the character Buzz Lightyear says, “I’m always sure. I’m Buzz Lightyear.”
- To show this example in body language that accompanies the line, you might put your hands on your hips and walk with long, certain strides.
- Though this is a humorous example, students will get the idea and have a chance to practice matching the speaker’s body language with the text in Hayden’s poem.