

RSL Grade 8

Musicianship Questions

Improvisation

Q. You will be asked to briefly *describe and demonstrate* - with reference to melody, rhythm, phrasing and dynamics - your approach to how you would improvise any part of your chosen song. You can choose the part.

We go through this individually with each student and their chosen piece.

Your Voice And The Microphone

Q. What is 'melisma' and what exercises can help you develop it?

It is a vocal ornamentation. Usually consisting of fast runs across notes. They can be rehearsed or improvised.

Any form of scale sung and then repeated in double time.

Q. Describe techniques you might employ to build emotional intensity in a soul/R&B style ballad.

To add emotion to any genre you want to consider dynamics (both gradual and dramatic), tonal quality, diction, onsets and offsets. Specifically for Soul/R&B you also want to consider the use of melismas, intentional vocal breaks and glottal onsets and offsets.

Q. Give two examples of exercises designed to develop intensity/power in a singer's 'mix' voice.

Slides 5th's at a time

Taking them from a mid-low point in your range through to your high register always focusing on vocal connection and resonance placement to ensure there is no aspiration or vocal breaks.

Single note crescendo/diminuendo

Working on single notes from a mid-low point in your range. Ensure you have good vocal connection and resonance placement.

Using support crescendo across the note engaging your current register and diminuendo back.

As you raise in pitch you will be working the balance between the head voice and chest voice, moulding a balance between the two as you crescendo and diminuendo.

Q. Explain the difference between a dynamic and a condenser microphone, including one example each of their uses.

Dynamic microphones employ a diaphragm/voice coil/magnet assembly which forms a miniature sound-driven electrical generator. Sound waves strike a thin plastic membrane (diaphragm) which vibrates in response. A small coil of wire (voice coil) is attached to the rear of the diaphragm and vibrates with it. The voice coil itself is surrounded by a magnetic field created by a small permanent magnet. It is the motion of the voice coil in this magnetic field which generates the electrical signal corresponding to the sound picked up by a dynamic microphone.

Condenser microphones are based on an electrically-charged diaphragm/backplate assembly which forms a sound-sensitive capacitor. Here, sound waves vibrate a very thin metal or metal-coated-plastic diaphragm. The diaphragm is mounted just in front of a rigid metal or metal-coated-ceramic backplate. In electrical terms this assembly or element is known as a capacitor (historically called a "condenser"), which has the ability to store a charge or voltage. When the element is charged, an electric field is created between the diaphragm and the backplate, proportional to the spacing between them. It is the variation of this spacing, due to the motion of the diaphragm relative to the backplate, that produces the electrical signal corresponding to the sound picked up by a condenser microphone. All condensers contain additional active circuitry to allow the electrical output of the element to be used with typical microphone inputs. This requires that all condenser microphones be powered: either by batteries or by phantom power (a method of supplying power to a microphone through the microphone cable itself).

(<http://www.shure.com/americas/support/find-an-answer/difference-between-a-dynamic-and-condenser-microphone>)

Dynamics are used for live performance
Condensers are used for recording