

Using *Fox in Sox* for a Vocal Warm-up

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Quick Guide

- ❖ **Keywords:** Vocal warm-up, speech, presentation
- ❖ **Learner English level:** Any
- ❖ **Learner maturity:** High school and above
- ❖ **Preparation time:** 5 minutes
- ❖ **Activity time:** 10 minutes
- ❖ **Materials:** Dr. Seuss's *Fox in Sox*, document camera, projector, projector screen

Ask any dancer or singer, and he or she will tell you that warming up before a performance is essential for a successful performance. In the same way, we need to teach our students the importance of vocal warm-up before they jump into their speech or presentation. I find Dr. Seuss's *Fox in Sox* an effective material for a vocal warm-up as it provides opportunities for the students to practice saying the vowels by saying various tongue twisters.

Preparation

Step 1: Borrow *Fox in Sox* from a library.

Procedure

Step 1: The instructor reads some pages from *Fox in Sox*. I recommend using a document camera, a projector, and a projector screen for this activity so that all the students can see the pictures and the sentences from the book.

Step 2: Ask the students to sit in pairs and have them read some sentences from the book to their partners several times.

Conclusion

Although *Fox in Sox* is a children's book, it may be hard for some students to read it smoothly at first since it is full of tongue twisters. However, as students practice reading it several times, it becomes a nice vocal warm-up before reading a lengthy speech out loud. This activity could easily lead to teaching oral interpretation.

Reference

Dr. Seuss. (1986). *Fox in Sox*. New York, NY: Random House. (Original work published 1965).

Audience Participation Through Peer Evaluation: Maximizing Student Involvement in Speech Contest Auditions

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Quick Guide

- ❖ **Keywords:** Speech contest, recitation contest, audition, peer assessment
- ❖ **Learner English level:** Any
- ❖ **Learner maturity:** Junior high school and above
- ❖ **Preparation time:** 10-20 minutes

- ❖ **Activity time:** One lesson
- ❖ **Materials:** Scoring sheets

Speech and recitation contests are common events in Japan. Participation can help students develop their confidence in expressing themselves in English, and improving their spoken English is a primary reason why students take part.

However, the audition phase of these competitions often minimizes student participation. This is because many auditions consist of a handful of students volunteering (or being volunteered) to take part in a private audition after classes. While the above method is quick and selects the ‘best’ students, it excludes the majority. Alternatively, every student gives their speech or recitation in front of the class during lessons or during homeroom, with the ‘best’ selected by the teacher. While every student takes part, it takes a long time and most students are doing nothing for most of this time.

To address these concerns, this article presents an approach that seeks to maximize student participation in the audition process via peer evaluation. Research shows that peer evaluations do not vary significantly from teacher evaluations (Azamoosh, 2013).

Preparation

Step 1: Before starting the audition process, it is essential to determine the total number of students who will participate in the speech or recitation contest. A useful rule of thumb for this is to multiply the number of participating student groups (such as or classes) by three. Thus, if there are four student groups, the total number of students taking part in the contest will be twelve.

Taking this approach also allows for two participants from each group to be selected via the audition process, with an additional third ‘wildcard’ participant selected by the teacher.

Step 2: Prepare student scoring sheets. These scoring sheets should be the same as the teacher’s, and be easy to understand. An example is provided below.

The score sheets should *not* have a space for the students to write their own names – their scores should be anonymous.

Procedure

Step 1: Explain to the students that the audition process will require them to evaluate their classmates.

Step 2: Distribute the score sheets and check that the students understand each score category.

Step 3: Provide good and bad examples for each category. This section should be light-hearted and useful illustrations of poor performance include the teacher demonstrating an exaggeratedly fast or slow pace, overly loud or whispered speech, using very odd intonation and pauses, hiding behind a script or staring at the ceiling, and so on.

Step 4: Divide the students into small groups. Each student then presents to their group, and is evaluated. While this is taking place, the teacher(s) should circulate and monitor the groups.

Step 5: Once all students have made their presentation and been evaluated, the evaluations are tabulated and each group’s winner (the student with the highest evaluation score) goes to the front of the class.

Step 6: Collect the used score sheets and distribute fresh ones.

Step 7: The winning students make their presentations a second time, but are now evaluated by the whole class *and* the teacher(s).

Step 8: Have the students tally the scores (e.g., by seating row), calculate and announce who will go on to the contest. At this stage, the teacher(s) can name a ‘wildcard’ student; a student who performed well, but did not win their group.

Conclusion

This format increases student involvement, empowering them and increasing their ownership of the contest, while ensuring that they remain

actively engaged throughout. The peer evaluations help students develop their active listening skills. Finally, participation in such activities helps students become more autonomous learners.

References

Azamoosh, M. (2013). Peer assessment in an EFL context: attitudes and friendship bias, *Language Testing in Asia*, 3(11).
<http://www.language-testing-asia.com/content/3/1/11>

Appendix: Sample Scoring Sheet

Name: (名前)	
Content: (内容)	/10
Delivery: (配信)	/10
Pronunciation: (発音)	/5
Total: (計)	/25

Pecha Kucha in EFL: Creating Creative Presentations

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Quick Guide

- ❖ **Keywords:** Pecha Kucha, presentations, creativity, self-efficacy
- ❖ **Learner English level:** Beginners and above
- ❖ **Learner Maturity:** High School and above
- ❖ **Preparation time:** 90-150 minutes
- ❖ **Activity time:** The average Pecha Kucha presentation will take 7-8 minutes per student
- ❖ **Materials:** Handouts, digital projector, computer

The use of presentations allows students more flexibility and space to explore creative expression. One form of presentation is Pecha Kucha (PK). PK is an entertaining and creative activity for students to learn to think on the fly while using English. PK's uncomplicated limitation of presenting 20 slides in total, each showing an image for 20 seconds is understandable by learners and can reflect the presenter's passions and interests.

Preparation

Step 1: Print out copies of the handouts to give to students. (See appendices section.)

Step 2: Obtain examples of PK presentations from pechakucha.org.

Procedure

Step 1: Introduce the history of PK and explain the fundamentals of PK creation.