

## CLaS Glossary of Terms

**Are/Not, Is/Not, Does/Not** These options are to be used during adjudication when assessing whether a technique is demonstrated or not. Techniques that should be developed by a particular level is assessed by “IS demonstrated.” Techniques that are merely introduced at a level and may not be developed are to be assessed with these options.

**Agogic:** Accent which is created by length, eg. elongating an emphasized syllable or shortening an unaccented syllable in Italian diction. Cf. Accent created by articulation or weight.

**Airflow:** The flow of air between the vocal folds. Balanced airflow refers to Semi-occluded vocal tract (SOVT) resulting in efficient vibration.

**Appoggio:** *Bel Canto* term for opposing forces of muscle which create a feeling of balance, floating, “on the breath,” or inhaling while singing.

**Articulation:** Shape, or envelop of individual tones created and influenced by use of breath, articulation markings, text, and style.

**Aspirate Onset:** Initiation of phonation with vocal folds apart. Resonance heard as “breathy.” Certain vocal styles require aspirate onset of varied degrees. (*vocal jazz, crossover*)

**Breath effort:** Engaged muscles of the lower body to create a clear, and age-appropriately resonant tone and efficient semi-occluded vocal tract (SOVT). Balanced breath effort is the sensation of a “suspended,” “inhaling” sensation in the lower body while phonating, without pushing. Imbalanced effort results in breathy or pressed phonation.

**Catch Breath:** A short breath taken in middle of a phrase or quickly in between phrases.

**Chest Voice:** Common term used to define singing with thick edges of vocal folds, used interchangeably with “thick folds” and “heavy mechanism.”

**Clavicular Breathing:** Inhalation in which the chest cavity raises up and abdominal muscles not released.

**Coached:** Refers to reminding and re-visiting techniques taught to singers who are not yet fluent in a technique or problem solving.

**Demonstrated:** When a concept has been taught to a greater degree than introduced, choir will demonstrate this concept to a greater degree, with inconsistencies. *Consistently demonstrated*, refers to a fluency of that technique.

**Enunciation:** How words are formed with regard to language, dialect, and style.

**Ensemble Sound:** The resultant sound of the ensemble as determined by singing technique and repertoire. This term is used in place of traditional “blend” as varied types of ensemble sound are desired determined by repertoire, style.

**Evident:** When a concept is introduced, teacher or adjudicator may observe that concept rarely or inconsistently as evidence that the concept was taught.

**Facility, or Vocal Facility:** Clarity, agility, flexibility, strength, range.

**Glottal Onset:** Initiation of phonation with the vocal folds closed or tight. A slight pop or catch is heard. Whereas glottal onset can cause fatigue and damage, the sensation of glottal closure, as if a glottal onset will happen, is helpful in body awareness for aspirate singers as well as resonance in certain styles of music. (*world music, musical theater*)

**Head Voice:** Common term used to define singing with thin edges of vocal folds, used interchangeably with “thin folds” and “light mechanism.”

**Low, Released Breath:** Traditionally “abdominal breathing” or “low breath,” refers to the relaxation of abdominal muscles during inhalation that are engaged during phonation.

**Mixed Register or Registration:** The smooth transition between traditional chest and head registers. S/A develop a mixing quality from A3 to Bb4, T/B from A3 to G4

**Onset:** How phonation begins. Onset can be aspirate (breathy, glottal “uh oh!”, or smooth and balanced).

**(Parentheses):** Used for examples of a specific literacy, a small sample of possible examples.

**Pronunciation:** The act of enunciation

**“Quotation Marks:”** used whenever popular vocal jargon is used. These terms often create confusion, but a level of prior knowledge as to the specific meaning of these terms is assumed.

**Resonance/Inner Resonating Spaces:** Shaping of the vocal tract, traditionally “tone color.” Resonance is affected by the lengthening and widening of the tract. Singers develop awareness and control of jaw, front and back of tongue, velum (*soft palate*), and other features. Movement often invited by imagery or prompts.

**Resonant Vowel/Resonating Vowel:** The feeling of breathing into a vowel as a method to shape the vocal tract. Changing the resonant vowel is presented as a more advanced method of Vowel Modification in extended registers and for ensemble sound.

**S,A,T,B:** Short hand for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass

**Syllable Stress/Unstress:** Expression through enunciating text with poetic emphasis. Emphasis can be communicated through varied weights (*heavy/light*), or agogic (*long/short*), depending on language or style.

**Tessitura(e):** Distinct from range, tessitura refers to a predominance of part writing in a particular part of the voice. One would say the tessitura is higher for a Tenor 1 in TTBB writing than it is in SATB writing, given the fact that in TTBB the T1 generally remains above the other voice parts, and has less movement through the range of the voice.

**Thin and Thick Folds:** Term used to define singing with thick or thin edges of vocal folds, used interchangeably with head voice and chest voice.

**Voices in Transition:** All changing voices such as adolescent, senescent (*aging*), and those involved in hormonal therapy due to gender change or medical reasons.

**Vowel Distortion:** Refers to varied symptoms of vowels that are not resonating efficiently. “Distortion” may be heard as variance of pitch, breathiness, pressing, dynamic, change in vibrato, or intelligibility and naturalness of the vowel.

**Vowel Modification:** Adjusting the sung vowel for ease of resonance and diction in extended registers, or to help with ensemble sound. *Cf.* Resonant Vowel.