

Name	Employment	Quote
Korre Foster	Austin Peay State University	Never sing louder than beautiful.
Christine Armistead	Washington University in St. Louis	Don't sing to avoid mistakes....greenlight your singing! Be WILLING to make mistakes... in fact, don't put on the brakes, rather, pirouette into them like a ballet dancer!
James Doing	University of Wisconsin School of Music	High notes are like mountains. Their perceived height depends on how far away one is when viewing them. From up close they seem very high and insurmountable, but from far away they are little more than small bumps. Approach top notes like they are way off in the distance....think horizontally not vertically. See those mountains in the distance and release the voice like you're throwing a Frisbee to them.
Paul Rowe	University of Wisconsin	When you sing high notes, you should have a wide base, narrow stem and open top...like a champagne glass!
Elizabeth R. Schauer	University of Arizona	How about this for performance: Relax! You all look as nervous as a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs.
David Edmonds	University of Montana	<p>“Even the space shuttle needs to jettison some weight as it ascends—please do the same with your voice.”</p> <p>“There’s a difference between sounding staccato and sounding over-medicated.”</p> <p>“Sing this bounced articulation like you’re walking on the moon—your feet leave the ground a great deal, but your body never stops moving.”</p>

Name	Employment	Quote
Deanna Joseph	Georgia State University	<p>"Sing in the sleeve of the sound."  "Sing with more headspace."  "Sing with more dome."</p>
Eric Charles Brown	Morehead State University	"Don't squeeze the tone.... Let it vibrate!"
Paul Houghtaling	University of Alabama	"Sing with beauty and joy. What other reasons are there to do what we do?"
Daniel Schuetz	Illinois State University	Do it again in the same tempo, but pretend you're singing it faster!
Trey Davis	Louisiana State University	<p>"Wake up your face."  "Turn on your imagination."  "What do you have to communicate to yourself and to the audience?"  "Align your body. Ground yourself. Imagine you are Gandalf, planting your staff into the ground, about to shout, 'You Shall Not Pass!'"</p>
William Hite	University of Massachusetts	<p>Si canta come si parla ("As you sing so should you speak" and by extension "as you speak so should you sing").  Peel the breath off the wall across the room and draw it to you.  Nosy, not nasal (refers to a masky resonance without resorting to a nasalized production).</p>
Dina Cancryn	MTSU	"End your phrase like a feather landing on a pillow, not a boulder."

Name	Employment	Quote
Hope Koehler	West Virginia University	<p>This is a lovely surprise for your teacher! I do use a few phrases a lot, and I make up new ones all the time. LOL! Here are some that refer to breathing and the voice's relationship to the breath energy. <b>"Your voice should be buoyant, like a beach ball on the water."</b> (This refers to allowing the breath energy to carry the voice rather than the muscles in the throat.) A beach ball is big and round and full, but it floats on the water just like the voice needs to float on the breath energy.</p> <p><b>"Take a surprise breath and keep the surprise inside when you sing."</b> When we're surprised and we breathe in, we almost always expand the middle of the torso, which is exactly what you want to have happen when you sing. Also, while you're singing, you don't want to lose that expansion, so "keep the surprise inside."</p>
Nicole C. Lamartine	University of Wyoming	<p>A few I have collected through the years:  Sing out from you as the phrase ascends.  Every note is related to the others— either going from or traveling towards.  Staccato is like skipping a rock on the water— the breath energy continues the connection.  A grounded sound originates from the feet.  Draw the phrase you want to hear.  You are a tube of air.  NO singing heads, just singing bodies.</p>
Robert Russell	University of Southern Maine	<p>Sing this phrase as if you are riding a wave, smoothly connected from crest to beach.</p>

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Elizabeth Hagerdorn	University of Wisconsin	"You don't need to send your air to the back wall, the air in the room carries sound waves for free."
Liz Tobias	University of New Hampshire	<p>"This crescendo needs to be epic, like a trip to Mordor and back."</p> <p>"Sing this as softly as you can, as soft as a dozen baby chickies."</p> <p>"Open this section up like the clouds are parting and there's a light shining from heaven."</p> <p>"Pronounce this like Mary Poppins."</p>
Rebecca Kreider	West Virginia University	Sing a bright vowel in a dark space.
Paul Richardson	Sanford University	<p>"If you're not going to sing where people can understand you, you might as well play kazoo."</p> <p>"Practice doesn't make perfect.... Perfect practice makes perfect."</p>
Sharon Mabry	Austin Peay State University	"The voice hangs from the roof of the mouth no matter whether you sing high or low, Picture a church dome and sing into it."
Laura Diddle	South Dakota State University	"Never louder than beautiful!"
Dominic F. Cossa	University of Maryland	Sing with the interest, not the principal of the voice.
Stephen E. Caldwell	University of Arkansas	"The pitch is flat. Raise your eyebrows, stand on your toes, and think of tall things."
Alfonse Anderson	University of Nevada	"The breath is the sound and responds to your energy."

Name	Employment	Quote
Linda Mabbs	University of Maryland	If you can hear yourself but you cannot hear the person next to you, you are singing too loud!
Theodore Mikkell Guerrant	University of Maryland	<p>There are several favorites I like to use:</p> <p>"An airplane needs air plus forward motion in order to fly. Singing, especially a cappella singing, works much the same way. Hollow notes need to be filled with air energy plus forward motion."</p> <p>"Singing is like getting on a train— the tracks represent the air column, the cars represent the vowels, and the consonants are the people getting on and off (this was an Evelyn Lear analogy)."</p> <p>Evelyn had lots of little expressions like "No one ever asked for their money back because you took too many breaths, but everyone will want their money back if you don't breathe." Or, "In German, if you're not spitting on the orchestra, you aren't using enough consonants."</p> <p>"Singing a legato line is like a swan gliding across the lake. The swan may appear to be doing nothing, but underneath, its feet are paddling rapidly," from Dr. Thea Kano.</p> <p>One of the funniest I ever heard was from the late Ruth Barron, who directed the chorus at College Park High School (GA): "Don't be a prison singer (someone always behind bars, looking for the key)."</p> <p>I really like the famous quote by Julie Andrews: "Amateurs practice until they can get it right. Professionals practice until they can't get it wrong."</p> <p>"A beautiful singing tone is the result of a balance, like dog plus cat, water plus sand, room and bloom plus ring and ping."</p> <p>Monica Otal reminds her singers to "always feed the dot."</p> <p>We all swear by Linda Mabbs' "Rule Number 24": "The consonant should be in the shape of the following vowel." Some teachers piggy-back on to that by saying that one should breathe in the shape of the vowel.</p> <p>Delores Ziegler says, "Make the space with the soft palate, then place the vowel on the hard palate."</p> <p>Martha Randall says, "Counting is your friend."</p> <p>Stan Engebretson is fond of saying, "All notes are not created equal."</p> <p>"The tongue should be relaxed, like a swimmer doing the dead man's float."</p> <p>"The breath is the moment of relaxation." (Dr. Molly Donnelly)</p> <p>I thought of one more that I use a lot: Jeffrey Buhman says, "Never sing on L, M, N, or R (the "lemoner" consonants), especially when they occur in the middle or end of words." [I noted that Crooners love to sit on these consonants and, in so doing, make piles of money— Perry Como could hold them out longer than anyone I ever heard.] Evelyn Lear also used to say, "Never try to sing on an L."</p> <p>Another one, by Regina McConnell: "Think of the throat as just a hole that should be kept open all the time."</p> <p>Myrna Rose Robertson used to say, "Smile with your throat."</p> <p>Jim Holloway used to say, "Breathe through your toes."</p> <p>Jim also used to say, "If you love that note, it will love you back."</p> <p>"S's are for ssssssnakes -- they're not nicccccc for ssssssinging!"</p>
Robert Grayson	Louisiana State University	Sing as light as you can, as long as you can. (for a long healthy singing life).
Lisa Conklin-Bishop	Austin Peay State University	For establishing energy in a high note I refer to the crescendo like a roller coast up and over motion.

Name	Employment	Quote
Lisa Lowry	Indiana State University	Down for up, up for down. Sing on the gesture of inhalation. Snarl it. Bite the apple. Sing it like smelling a rose.
Paul Ayres	University of West London	<p>"More legato! Like stroking a velvet cat while swimming in a vat of molasses."  "Diminuendo means loud."  For an energetic pianissimo: "You need to sound like a very, very large choir, a very long way away."  For a unison chorale: "You need to sound not like singers, not like a choir, not even like a large congregation— but like a whole people."</p> <p>And a few from the English/sarcastic school of choral directing:  "I want the texture in this passage to be really thick and slow-moving.  Won't be a problem for you, basses."  "We need to be more aggressive in [measure] 39. A bit like Germany."  "I'll say that again, for the hard of understanding."  "OK, you can put the words in now, if you like."</p>
Nathan Gunn	University of Illinois	Drink back the sound (meaning let your whole body resonate).
Deborah Lifton	Voice Teacher	One of my favorite phrases is "Don't give yourself a voice lesson on stage!" Also to teach breath: "Imagine you have a bungee chord all the way around your waist and it's made of mouths, and when you sing, the mouths giggle."

Name	Employment	Quote
Nancy Ogle	University of Maine	"Drink the tone."
Eph Ehly	University of Nebraska	<p>"For the common things of every day, God gave man speech in a common way;</p> <p>For the deeper things men think and feel, He gave the poet words to reveal;</p> <p>Bur, for the heights and depths that know no reach, God gave man Music, The soul's own speech."</p>
Sandra Moon	Louisiana State University	<p>"Follow through with the phrase, like you are throwing a frisbee." (or swinging a bat, throwing a football, etc.)</p> <p>"Aim the tone to the back of your throat."</p> <p>"Spin the air faster."</p>

Name	Employment	Quote
Leslie A. Manfredo	Illinois State University	<p>Here are some choral phrases that I constantly tell my groups:            Not all notes are created equal.            Use the pick-up notes as springboards into the downbeat.            The way to get good choral blend in through uniform vowel shapes.            The best choral tone and blend is achieved through "golfball" vowels (singing as though you have a golfball in your mouth).            Consonants must be exaggerated for clarity.            Forte consonants even in a piano dynamic.            Our job as performers is to put forth the message of the composer.</p> <p><i>This is close to my heart as I am retiring at the end of the next school year, May 2017. I actually used to live in Cookeville, Tennessee, many years ago. I taught voice at Tennessee Tech for a year and Choral music at Cookeville High School. I have done most of my teaching in high school choirs in Illinois but now teach choral methods and direct a choir at Illinois State University.</i></p>

Name	Employment	Quote
Donna Harler	University of Nebraska	<p>It's not how high you go - it's how you go high.</p> <p>This comes from Stephen Smith's book "The Naked Voice." He is talking about habits that if practiced faithfully in the "easy" part of ones voice, it is relatively simple to maintain those good habits when going up. It does NO good to just try to sing high!!!!</p> <p>Singing is the reward for proper preparation.</p> <p>I believe this SO much. If one is clear about the pitch and vowel or consonant to sing BEFORE even inhaling, that pitch and vowel are already created in your throat and mouth. To not disturb what your brain and vocal cords have already prepared, you should feel as if you are energizing the concept of the pitch in your brain rather than pushing what's in your throat up.</p>
Adele Paxton	Central Connecticut State University	Breathe in as if you are inhaling the fragrance of a beautiful rose.
Christine Abraham	Mezzo-soprano, soprano	"Imagine (even pantomime) that you are pulling back an arrow through the bow as you sing through a phrase. Feel the resistance. Don't release the arrow until you take your next breath."
Gail Robinson-Oturu	Austin Peay State University	<p>"The tallest tree needs deeply planted roots to continue to live. Keep your singing (even high notes) deeply rooted."</p> <p>"Once you cut a flower from its roots, it gradually dies. Stay grounded and connected for your singing to bloom."</p>

Name	Employment	Quote
Loraine Sims	Louisiana State University	"Drink in the tone."
Amy Rosine	Kansas State University	Sing as if there is a Grapefruit in the back of your mouth.  Stand like a banana.amy
Aleksandr Agamirzov	Tenor	Drop your jaw. Have the sensation of yawning. Breathe deeply around your waist. Make vowels pure and consonants crisp. Do not think up or down, think forward. Use all your body for a support.
David Goulet	University of Southern Maine	Flood that phrase with sound, not volume, sound.  When you perform, sing as though everything that comes from your throat is going to be golden. Leave the editor out in the green room.  Lean into that phrase gently, persuasively. Caress the words in that section.  <i>The first one is mine. The rest are from my first voice teacher, Marshall F. Bryant, way back in the dark ages.</i>

Name	Employment	Quote
Susan Williams	University of Alabama	<p>"Practice makes awesome," (rather than perfect).  "Easy onset," (to avoid pushing).  "Sing on the gesture of inhalation," (To avoid collapsing the ribs). -Lamperti  "Imagine your jaw is weightless," (to encourage looseness).  "Floaty tongue," to keep people from tensing or pressing it down.</p> <p><i>Interestingly, I have an article about vocal metaphors coming out in the Journal of Singing later this fall. Tell your teacher to keep an eye out for it.</i></p>
John Mount	University of Hawaii	<p>I can think of two vocal metaphors that I attribute to my voice teacher Dr. Berton Coffin: To the singer who gets over dramatic and over sings: <b>"Fire in the Heart, but Ice on the Brain"</b>  Just a humorous observation on diction: <b>"The trouble with singers is that they are either "Consonated" or they have "loose vowels."</b>"</p>
Ann Marie Daehn	Missouri State University	<p>Singing is just fancy exhalation.  Color the musical line with many colors, but the same brush.  Let your tongue be a carpet in your mouth.</p>
Jamie-Rose Guarrine	University of Massachusetts Amherst	<p>"Singing is a full body Olympic Event!"</p>

Name	Employment	Quote
Lori McCann	Montclair State University	<p>I have a metaphor that I use with my students when they are singing a descending phrase. The idea is that I want them to sing smoothly and you stay connected and not land on any particular note too hard, especially the last one. I call it "Don't drop the baby!"</p>
Zrandall Stroope	Oklahoma State University	<p>Long notes generate energy, and short notes burn it up.</p> <p>A note is either coming or going.</p> <p>If your vocal machine has no zig zag— it is not good day. Keep the voice always spinning for a long vocal life.</p> <p>The term rest is a misnomer— it is a preparation.</p> <p>When you don't know what to do (musically or in life as a whole), DO SOMETHING.</p> <p>Musical intensity is like sonic spontaneous combustion. Each note excites the next.</p> <p>Pressure behind the line is like steadily pushing a refrigerator across a stage.</p>

Name	Employment	Quote
Kathryn Cowdrick	University of Rochester	As a grad student in NYC, I would walk downtown after each Sunday church job. I would pass the store windows but was struck by the ones at Tiffany's. They were smaller but my eye was more drawn to them than to the larger windows. Each month a piece of jewelry would be featured and the little spotlight positioned to hit the ring, cuff link or watch in just the right way that the window was illuminated. When I began to teach singing after many years of performing I would think about that window and describe to my students that the jewelry needed to be positioned right and the light needed to work in just the right way. The jewelry is the voice and the light is the breath. We use the term singing on the "Tiffany shelf" instead of masque resonance. It is all about the words and notes sparkling that makes even the smaller windows vibrant.
Lisa Foerster	Ohio University	Keep the breath moving smoothly, as if you are a stream of water, holding up a spinning ball.
Benton Hess	University of Rochester	My favorite two quotations from Giovanni Battista Lamperti both have to do with breathing. First, for those people who like to move their tummy muscles, but don't really get a good breath: Don't mistake the coffee cup for the coffee. And secondly: You didn't stop singing because you ran out of breath; you ran out of breath because you stopped singing.
John Ray		"A singer with a cold is like a runner with a broken leg."

Name	Employment	Quote
Leslie Garbis	Belmont University	Let your sound ride on top of your airflow like a surfer rides a surfboard to shore.
Dina Livingston Friedley	Idaho State University	When students are becoming more familiar with their vocal mechanism and particularly sensations associated with their vocal folds, I frequently talk about the concept of legato feelings and the idea of letting their breath stroke the vocal folds as one would a kitten. Many young singers engage in feeling and therefore, hitting or smacking their folds together. So I remind them to "Stroke the Kitty, don't Smack the Kitty!"
John Nix	University of Texas San Antonio	When singing a phrase with a high note, "Sing THROUGH it, not TO it."
John Wayman	University of Texas Arlington	Sing with lower body support as doing a dancers plie or a weight lifters shoulder squat!
Kyle Ferrill	Memphis State University	<p>"Sing through an inner smile."</p> <p>"Breathe as if you're smelling a rose."</p> <p>"Stretch the roof of your mouth like the dome of a cathedral."</p> <p>"Expand your ribcage like a barrel."</p>
Ryan Fisher	Memphis State University	<p>"Sing the phrase so clearly that the listener could paint the shape of the line."</p> <p>"Focus your tone as if it were a laser penetrating a point in the room."</p> <p>"Sing this phrase as if you are a bird gliding in the air."</p> <p>"Visualize a still pond on a cold morning as you sing this song."</p>

Name	Employment	Quote
Susan Owen-Leinert	Memphis State University	One thing I hear myself repeating to my students is "You have to think of yourself as a breathing machine!" when trying to help them with breath support.
Tony Deaton	Lee University	I'm stealing one from my voice teacher: "You can sing as beautifully as you can think."
Dayne Frost	Lee University	"Sing it the way you would like to hear it sung!"
Dominic M. Aquilino	East Tennessee State University	One of my favorites to use is "99.9 percent of your vocal success happens in the preceding breath. That's where you make the choices. After that, it's all follow-through of that first invested idea."
Kevin Ford	University of Tennessee Chattanooga	The one that springs to mind is to "sing as calmly as the surface of a lake at dawn."
Emily Sternfield	Wichita State University	I like to use the image of a bucket in a well. The notes are the bucket and the body is the rope. The bucket gets higher by the rope being pulled down. Similarly, as notes ascend, the body/breath mechanism is active lower in the body.
Rebecca St. Goar	University of Tennessee Chattanooga	Arch the soft palate like a dome in a great cathedral. Pretend the vocal line is like a long silk scarf.
Janet Holeman	Lipscomb University	"Approach that pitch from the top, as if you are a little fairy landing on a leaf." "Keep the money tight."— Squeeze the buttocks.

## Vocal Metaphors and quotations by Amalia Wills

Amalia Wills, from Mt. Juliet, TN, is a freshman majoring in studio art at Austin Peay State University. She has been in choir for the majority of her life; following choir through elementary school she made Honor Choir in fifth grade, Honors 58 in eighth, Freshman Honors her freshman year, Midstate sophomore and junior year, and was an All State alternate junior year. She also participated in all four years of high school choir, including her school's audition-only women's choir and SATB ensemble. She has already been accepted as a second soprano in Austin Peay's audition ensemble and will start in the spring. Amalia originally created this compilation as a surprise gift for her high school choir director, Mrs. Sandy Elliott, who never stopped believing in her and inspired her to be the best she could be; she hopes it helps others do the same.

Thank you again for all the support!!