

Vocal dynamics are essential for preventing a stagnant performance. Each note and/or word in a song must be made interesting to the audience.

Application:

- Increase/decrease in volume
- Substituting consonants (using “zz” within “ss,” “D” for a “T,” etc.)
- Vary any vocal line
- Rhythm/bagpipe: Hold your breath and use your mouth to create the sound of the words. It is important that you don’t see this as pronunciation, as it is not a contemporary thing to do, but you see your mouth as a drum kit and make it fun, now sing it like this
- Phrasing (breath): Be adventurous, don’t take a breath after a phrase but continue it over and include other dynamics such as using increase in volume.
- Add ornamentation: vibrato, small repetition, slides, note bends
- Adding vowels/consonants to create rhythm or removing them...
Original: “when you rise in the morning, and you know that it’s right”
Changes: “*when you n-rise in th mmmorning and you a-know that it is a-right*”
- Change the way you use words...
Original: “when you rise in the morning, and you know that it’s right”
Changes: “*when yoe rye zin the monin’ n ya know tha dits right*”
- Vocal instrumental scat: imitating instruments like trumpets, flutes, etc.
- Articulation through characterisation. Sing a phrase as if you’re happy, jealous, or angry. Even though this is not what the song is about, it will create dynamics.
- Add silences/rests
- “Talk” singing
- Change in vowel shape. Make sure this is consistent with style. E.g. “may” instead of “me.”
- Yodel
- Harmonics: Use of different octaves, change in vocal sets, e.g. Head/chest voice, twang, cry, falsetto, etc.

Be Aware:

- Use of all the above in one song will be counterproductive and distracting
- Above techniques need to be practiced and mastered before implementing in performance
- Sensitivity to style is required. Some of the above suggestions may not be suitable to certain styles.
- In group settings, variations must be pre-planned to avoid collision of vocal parts.

Other vocal training resources available at:
www.harmonyinworship.com

