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# ARTICULATING THE GOSPEL

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Vocal Exercises for Ministry Presentations



*“Speak the speech, I pray, as I  
pronounced it to you, trippingly  
on the tongue.”*

– Prince Hamlet

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## **BEFORE YOU BEGIN**

Proverbs says, “Through patience a ruler can be persuaded, and a gentle tongue can break a bone” (Proverbs 25:15). James says “no one can tame the tongue. (James 3:(8)

The exercises in this booklet take both of these ideas into account.

These exercises are simple and fun, and yet they are designed for serious work: Articulating the gospel of Christ – singing, speaking a sermon, or simply reading the Scriptures.

The tongue is a muscle. Like any muscle in the body, the tongue benefits from exercise to become stronger. As a speaker or singer, slow, repetitive practice allows the tongue to become stronger so that, when used at full speed in presentation, the movement is clearer, more precise, and effortless, much the way an athlete performs in competition, or a dancer in concert.

For practice, each of the Tongue Twisters has brief, italicized instructions to be read slowly and aloud. Just for fun. The actual Tongue Twisters are in larger type for people who use bifocals or reading cheaters from the drug store. You may post the Tongue Twisters on a mirror or music stand for repeated practice.

These exercises are samples. Feel free to scour the Internet for other illustrations, or find your own. Practice them individually, yes; and incorporate them as a group exercise before each rehearsal or performance.

To gauge success, here are two suggestions before you start.

1. Rehearse and record a favorite song. Don’t listen to it. Put the recording away. Try these exercises at least three times a week for three weeks. (Preferably daily; certainly before a group rehearsal.) After three weeks, rehearse and record the same song. This time, listen to both recordings when you are done. Discuss what you hear.
2. For pastors or others who speak up front (especially teens), we are including a King James passage from Matthew for you to record. Do not listen. Practice three weeks. Record the passage again. Listen to both. Discuss what you hear.

However you use these exercises, keep in mind Isaiah’s encouragement in your work:

*“How beautiful on the mountain are the feet of those who bring good news...”*

-- Isaiah the Prophet, Chapter 52, Verse 7



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## IN THE BEGINNING WAS THE WH-erD of GoD!

*In accordance with our motto, "The best script is Scripture," read this King James Version passage of Matthew. Record yourself, but don't listen right away. Be aware of what happens to you as you read. What names are difficult to read? Do you find yourself struggling? Apologizing wanting to skip some? Make a note of how you feel when you finish.*

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### **Matthew 1:7-16** **King James Version (KJV)**

And Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa;

And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias;

And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias;

And Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias;

And Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon:

And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel;

And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor;

And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud;

And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob;

And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.



## SHORT SIMPLE STUFF TO SAY SWIFTLY AND SWEETLY

*Practice for strengthening plosives (the beginnings of words) and closures (final consonants). Say each segment three times in succession without stopping or laughing.*

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- The lips, the teeth, the tip of the tongue,

the tip of the tongue, the teeth, the lips.

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- A box of biscuits,
- A box of mixed biscuits,
- And a biscuit mixer.

+++

- A big black bug bit a big black bear

and the big black bear bled blood.

+++



## PIRATING THE LETTER ARRRR.....

*Practice R and TH by over ex-ag-ger-ra-ting your jaw and mouth movements, and being deliberate about placing your tongue TH-rew your tee-TH aT the beginning or TH-eee eND of the worDS.*

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- Round the rugged rocks the ragged rascals ran.
- Revelers revel in leveling levels.
- Ray Rag ran across a rough road. Across a rough road Ray Rag ran.

Where is the rough road Ray Rag ran across?

+++

- Thistle sticks, sixty six thousand and six thistle sticks.
- Theophulous Thistle, the thistle sifter, thrust a thousand thistles through the thick of his thumb.



## ES IS FOR SEUSS AND SALIVA

*This is an over-all, full body exercise. You Wh-ill move your Mm-outh anD your tee-Th, anD your liPsss, anD clicK yuh-OR TH-roaT. You Wh-ill pRob-ulb-lee have a Mm-outh full of Wah-ter as you do THis. TH-aT is becaWzz you will be breathing properly and supporting from your diaphragm keeping you larynx and throat lubricated, creating mouth sweat, commonly called SSSuh-li-vuh*

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### **About Socks by Dr. Seuss**

Give me the gift of a grip-top sock,

A clip drape shipshape tip top sock.

Not your spinslick slapstick slipshod stock,

But a plastic, elastic grip-top sock.

None of your fantastic slack swap slop

From a slap dash flash cash haberdash shop.

Not a knick knack knitlock knockneed knickerbocker sock

With a mock-shot blob-mottled trick-ticker top clock.

Not a supersheet seersucker ruck sack sock,

Not a spot-speckled frog-freckled cheap sheik's sock

Off a hodge-podge moss-blotched scotch-botched block.

Nothing slipshod drip drop flip flop or glip glop

Tip me to a tip top grip top sock.



## WHY TO MOVE YOUR JAW

*Your mouth may move rapidly like a saw to work through the letters N and K, and maybe even tickle your sinuses.*

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You know New York, you need New York,  
you know you need unique New York.

## A SIMPLE VARIATION

Unique New York.

Unique New York.

Unique New York.





## Winding Up Wh-iTH Double-You

*You will Feel like a WH-ind mill WH-iTH a door rapidly closing. As you get stronger, F-or Fuh-nnn, RRRRoll the R on rat-a-tat; and endeavor to say the entire sentence in one breath.*

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What a to-do to die today, at a minute or two to two;

a thing distinctly hard to say, but harder still to do.

We'll beat a tattoo, at twenty to two

a rat-tat-tat- tat-tat-tat- tat-tat-tattoo

and the dragon will come when he hears the drum

at a minute or two to two today, at a minute or two to two.



## **AN-ND NOW, THE WH-erD of GoD! (Again)**

*Put together the previous activities and speak this passage of Scripture. How does it feel in your body? How does this reading compare to your first attempt days ago?*

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And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud;

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