Each of us has our own unique musical instrument – our voice! This episode examines the voice and the way mankind has sung through the centuries to create music. To demonstrate vocal development, Quaver portrays a caveman, a troubadour, and an opera star. In a veritable vocal variety show, he welcomes a bass, tenor, alto, and soprano, as well as a gospel singer, yodeler, opera singer, falsetto expert, and a country crooner.

Students will learn:
• How each voice has a unique range, volume, tone, and style.
• How to recognize the four voice types: bass, tenor, alto, and soprano.
• How singers warm up their voices and how to practice breath control when singing.
• How singing has been employed throughout history.
• How many different ways and opportunities there are to sing.

### Vocabulary

- **Bass**
- **Tenor**
- **Alto**
- **Soprano**
- **Vibrato**
- **Falsetto**
- **Yodel**
- **Opera**
- **Act 1**
- **Vocal Cords**
- **Diaphragm**
- **Troubadour**
- **Vocal ornaments**
- **Spiritual**
- **Vocal Inflection**
- **Technique**
- **Resonant frequency**

* concepts included in the Teacher Guide, but not in the DVD
Quaver meets a bass, tenor, alto, and soprano. Voices are categorized by the range of sound produced: low, low/medium, medium/high, or high.

Vocal oddities with an opera singer, falsetto expert, and yodeler. There are many vocal techniques and styles. Examples include vibrato (the waver in the voice), falsetto (singing notes over a man’s normal range), and yodeling (going low to high very quickly).

Phone box adventures to the music hall. An opera singer demonstrates vocal exercises and performs.

A performance of Swing Low, Sweet Chariot. A gospel singer demonstrates breath and diaphragm control, and introduces the thought that singing can be studied in college in preparation for a career in music.

Singing country-style. Country music singers often incorporate a vocal inflection, which sounds like a hiccup.

1. Quaver meets a bass, tenor, alto, and soprano
   - What they teach: Voices are categorized by the range of sound produced: low, low/medium, medium/high, or high.
   - Music Standard: 6

2. Vocal oddities with an opera singer, falsetto expert, and yodeler
   - What they teach: There are many vocal techniques and styles. Examples include vibrato (the waver in the voice), falsetto (singing notes over a man’s normal range), and yodeling (going low to high very quickly).
   - Music Standard: 6

3. Phone box adventures to the music hall
   - What they teach: An opera singer demonstrates vocal exercises and performs.
   - Music Standard: 9

4. A performance of Swing Low, Sweet Chariot
   - What they teach: A gospel singer demonstrates breath and diaphragm control, and introduces the thought that singing can be studied in college in preparation for a career in music.
   - Music Standard: 6

5. Singing country-style
   - What they teach: Country music singers often incorporate a vocal inflection, which sounds like a hiccup.
   - Music Standard: 6

**LESSON INTRO** Introducing the episode

Ask students: “What is the cheapest instrument in the world?” Add to the intrigue by stating: “You already have one.” Tell them that everyone has a brilliantly made, unique instrument conveniently located in his or her throat – the voice!

Select one student to stand in front of the group and put on a blindfold. Discreetly select four students to stand next to him or her and read this sentence: “My voice is different from everybody else’s.” The blindfolded person has to guess who is saying the sentence (which should be easy). Remove the blindfold and ask the student what information he or she used to guess who was reading. Tell students that just as each person is unique, so is each person’s voice.

Choose a simple song to sing together such as the chorus of Lean on Me. Have the boys sing, then the girls take a turn. Ask why the girls sound different than the boys.

**Variation:** Line students up in order of who can sing the lowest note. Repeat the exercise, organizing them according to their highest pitch.

In this episode, Quaver explores different ways the voice can be used to make music.
Discussion Points

- Name the four vocal ranges mentioned in this episode.
  - bass, tenor, alto, and soprano
- What is vibrato?
  - a fast “wobble” or vibration of the voice
- What is falsetto?
  - a person singing above the break in his voice
- What muscles are vital for singing?
  - the vocal cords and the diaphragm

Materials Needed

- A ball
- Tissue paper

Sing Inside Your Head
Purpose: Responding to a conductor and vocal control
Select a song for students to sing such as *You Are My Sunshine*.
Put your hand on your head to signal students to sing inside their heads, mouthing the lyrics with no audible sound. Raise your hand to signal students to sing aloud. Begin by singing alternate phrases in this manner, and then get trickier by randomly lowering and raising the hand. For added fun, have students add exaggerated expressions and gestures to accompany the lyrics.

Variation: Select students to lead the group.

Pass the Lyric
Purpose: Listening and working as a team
Give one student a ball, and have him or her sing the first phrase of a song. Near the end of the phrase, the student will pass the ball to another student who will sing the second phrase, and so on.

Variation: Make it a competition. If a student misses a phrase, he/she sits out the rest of the round.

Hold On!
Purpose: Breath control
Play or sing a pitch that is in a comfortable range. At the count of three, all students sing the pitch with a neutral syllable like ooh (rhymes with you). When students run out of breath, they stop singing. Who is the last student singing? Give students small strips of tissue paper to hold in front of their mouths so they can observe the steady stream of air being exhaled.
Chant or Sing?
Purpose: Making words rhythmical when singing
Sing together a familiar song such as *Old McDonald Had a Farm*. Then announce that you are taking away the melody. Perform the song as a chant (speaking in rhythm). Repeat the exercise using a contemporary hit song. Most songs will sound quite funny. Emphasize the difference between the chanting voice and the singing voice by asking students to describe each.

SATB VIP Day
Purpose: Hearing and analyzing a vocal quartet
Invite a soprano, alto, tenor, and bass quartet to perform for your students. Have them demonstrate their vocal ranges and talk about the techniques they employ. To locate a quartet, contact local high schools, theatre groups, or churches.

**VIDEO REPLAY**
Lionel Sings!
Purpose: Vocal exercising
Look again at the scene with Lionel the opera singer, and have students listen to the vocal exercises he demonstrates to Quaver. For added fun there are additional vocal exercises for students to try on the IWB.

**WEB ACTIVITIES**

- **QLyrics**
  Students can actually record their voices into the computer and save their songs online. They can write backing tracks for their song as well.

- **Venues**
  Take the metro to the opera hall. Listen to all of the different examples of opera. Play the matching game, solve the jigsaw puzzle, and earn **Medals**.
### Label Hester

**Purpose:** The anatomy of singing

The worksheet provided includes diagrams of the breathing apparatus (i.e., lungs and diaphragm) and the vocal mechanism (i.e., vocal cords, mouth, etc.) of our animated character Hester. Instruct students to label Hester. Make this sheet part of your Quaver instrument file.

### I Have Style!

**Purpose:** Developing music appreciation skills

Of the styles of music presented in this lesson (opera, country, gospel, and yodeling), which did your students find most intriguing? Have each write a paragraph at home explaining his/her reasons. Read them aloud at the next session and determine which style was most popular.

### Q-Tips

Have students sing *Quaver* on every note of the scale as a warm-up exercise, then ask them to sing again using their name.

### Hit the Pitch

**Purpose:** Assessing vocal ability

This exercise is useful to assess a student’s ability to sing in tune and keep records of growth and progress. This assessment sheet will help track their ability to sing individual notes, scales, repeated phrases, and complete songs.
Language Arts

Instruct students to read or make up a short story with at least three characters. Ask them to create visual representations of one or more characters in the story. You may have them depict a single scene, or if time permits, a series of scenes. Listen to *Bizet’s Carmen, The Toreador* (Track 1) while they are working.

*Variation: Taking a cereal box, students can create a stage with curtains and cut-out, stand-up characters.*

Science

An opera singer can break glass by singing a loud and high-pitched note. It’s a fact. What are the factors that would enable such an occurrence? Sound waves will resonate with a glass at a certain pitch called the resonant frequency; this will cause the glass to vibrate and smash.

*Note: A number of video demonstrations can be found on the Internet by searching “voice breaking glass.”*

Social Studies

Yodeling was developed in the Central Alps of Europe as a method of communication between alpine mountaineers or between alpine villages. This non-musical, multi-pitched “yelling” later becoming part of the region’s traditional lore and musical expression. Ask your students to try yodeling by going between their head voice and chest voice. Do you think there is a reason that this style of communication was used in the mountain regions? (hearing two distinct notes when yodeling is very important when surrounded by a very echoed environment) There are other cultures that have used this head and chest voice sound. Research Pygmy polyphonic singing, Georgian Traditional singing, Tuvan throat singing, and Persian music for some more examples.

Singing Super Quiz!

*Purpose: Recognizing and appreciating different voice ranges*

As each track is played, have students write on their worksheets which style of music they are hearing, and how they would classify the singer: a high or low female, or a high or low male.

- **Track 2** Cindy - female, high singer
- **Track 3** Verdi’s Il Trovatore, Soldiers Chorus - bass, low singer
- **Track 4** Latin Nights - female, high singer
- **Track 5** Mozart’s The Queen of the Night Aria - female, high singer
- **Track 6** Monkus Chantus 2 - male, low singer
- **Track 7** We Gotta Dance - male, high singer

**The Barber of Seville**

*Purpose: The basics of opera*

One of the best-loved operas is Rossini’s *The Barber of Seville*. Two of the most famous pieces from this opera are: *Overture (Track 8)* and *Largo al Factotum (Track 9)*. Like most operas, the story is very complicated; however, while some operas are very serious or tragic, Rossini’s masterpiece is quite comedic. The worksheet provides students a brief synopsis of the opera to help them understand the plot. Research other songs from this opera on the Internet.
Teacher Notes

Featured Instrument

Voice