



Voice Teacher Profile Projects

**What Will The Evaluators
Be Looking For?**

Project #1 – Write Your Teaching Philosophy

This project asks you to write your teaching philosophy (maximum of 600 words). When considering your teaching philosophy, you might reflect on the following (taken from *Developing a Professional Teaching Philosophy*, by Lucinda Lear, NCTM; adapted by Deborah Wallace, NCTM, 2006):

What is a teaching philosophy?

- A. A philosophy of teaching statement is a written narrative that summarizes:
 1. Your concept of teaching and learning
 2. A description of how you teach
 3. An explanation of why you teach as you do

- B. The statement may:
 1. Demonstrate reflection, perspective and purpose
 2. Communicate your goals and expectations (attendance, participation, practice and performance requirements)
 3. Explain your choices and preferences (age/level of students; curriculum and materials including repertoire; orientation and long-range overview)

Your philosophy defines **how** you teach, **why** you teach, **what** you teach, **who** you teach and impacts every determination you make in your professional life. It may include extra-musical life skills you want your lessons to impart to your students.

Additional resources include:

Websites such as:

- Haugen, Lee. (1998, March). *Writing a Teaching Philosophy Statement*. Retrieved December 20, 2009, from Iowa State University, Center for Teaching Excellence website: www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/philosophy.html
- University of Minnesota. (2009, December 10). *Writing your teaching philosophy: A step-by-step process*. Retrieved December 20, 2009, from the University of Minnesota, Center for Teaching and Learning website: www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/tutorials/philosophy/index.html

Texts:

- Boytim, Joan Frey. (2003). *The Private Voice Studio Handbook—A Practical Guide to All Aspects of Teaching*. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Corporation.

Journals:

- Wallace, Deborah. (2006). "Certification: What is YOUR teaching philosophy?" *American Music Teacher*, 56(2): 52–53; 56(3): 50–51.
- Webster, P., & Johnson, R. (2006). Sound thinking: Are you product-oriented, process-oriented, or both? *Keyboard Companion: Perspectives in Pedagogy*, 17(2): 30–33.

- 1A:** In your teaching philosophy, the evaluators will expect you to include a knowledgeable, substantive and thoroughly developed summary of your **educational goals** for your students. Include what you believe are the most important skills and concepts you want your students to learn to help them develop into competent musicians. You may wish to include any life skills and concepts you want to impart to your students.
- 1B:** The evaluators will expect your teaching philosophy to also include a statement about **at least one additional topic** (from the list below) that is knowledgeable, substantive and thoroughly developed.
- Development of a healthy technique
 - Development of proficient musical skills
 - Development of artistic and expressive performance skills
 - *Different learning modalities – aural learners
 - *Different learning modalities – visual learners
 - *Different learning modalities – kinesthetic learners
 - Preferred age(s)/level(s) for introducing a student to formal voice lessons and discuss why you prefer these age(s)/level(s).

*For additional information on student learning modalities, we recommend:

- Garcia, Susanna. (2002, January 1). Learning styles and piano teaching. *Piano Pedagogy Forum*, 5(1). [http://www.mtna.org/media/58356/Garcia Article.pdf](http://www.mtna.org/media/58356/Garcia%20Article.pdf)
- Bachus, N., & Torkelson, S. (2008, Spring). How would you teach the same piece of music to students with different learning styles? *Clavier Companion*, 19(2). Retrieved December 21, 2009, from www.claviercompanion.com.

Project #2 – Analyze Four Teaching Pieces

Historical, Theory and Teaching analysis: Questions A–F

You will need to answer questions A–F **for each of the four songs**. Each question (A–F) should be answered with 150 (minimum) to 300 (maximum) words.

- A. Explore each of the four songs, indicating what you would discuss with a student about the historical era, the general characteristics of the vocal music of this era, the life of the composer, his or her compositional style and the song itself (such as when, where and why it was written.) You may wish to consider such areas as notation, scores, accompaniments, pitch, vibrato, words and music, voice types and registers, ornamentation, rubato, tempo and articulation. The evaluators will be looking for information the student would find relevant to each song and that would be comprehensible to the typical intermediate student.
- B. The evaluators will be looking for theory information that the student would find relevant to the song and that would be comprehensible to the typical intermediate student. This could include the form, keys, cadence locations and types, modulations,

interesting or unusual harmonies and so forth. Be sure to specify measure numbers and to which beat of the measure you are referring in your answers. You should not give a chord by chord analysis, but rather synthesize and discuss what would help a student at this level understand the impact of the theory on the study and performance of each song.

- C. Discuss **at least three** specific skills a student must possess to successfully sing each song. These are skills the student should have at least initially experienced prior to studying this song, and should be at least moderately able to use in successfully learning this song.
- D. Discuss a historically and stylistically appropriate approach to interpreting each song. Describe how the compositional characteristics of each era affect how each song is interpreted. Style could, for example, include comments on significant aspects of melody and its influence on the interpretation of the text, harmony, rhythm, accompaniment and text, as well as such elements as the appropriate use of dynamics, phrasing, expression and ornamentation.
- E. Discuss **at least four** potential reading and/or technical difficulties in each song and how you would help the student solve these four problems. The evaluators will be checking to see if four specific and valid difficulties are listed and will be evaluating what strategies you would specifically use to help the student solve each problem.
- F. Discuss where you would mark appropriate practice strategies and/or memory sections in this song. The evaluators will be looking for the specific areas you mark and an explanation of why you marked these particular areas.

Suggested Sources For Study:

(These are available at online or local bookstores.)

Music History

- Griffiths, Paul. (2006). *A Concise History Of Western Music*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Burkholder, J. P., Grout, D. J., & Palisca, C. V. (2010). *A History Of Western Music*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company.

Music Theory

- Kostka, S., & Payne, D. (2009). *Tonal Harmony: With An Introduction To Twentieth-Century Music* (6th ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Tagliarino, B. (2002). *Music Theory: A Practical Guide For All Musicians*. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard.
- Surmani, A., Manus, M., & Surmani, K. (1998) *Alfred's Essentials Of Music Theory: A Complete Self-Study Course*. Van Nuys, CA: Alfred Publishing Co.
- Jones, G. T. (1994). *HarperCollins College Outline: Music Theory*. New York: HarperCollins.

Music Pedagogy

- Boytim, Joan Frey. (2003). *The Private Voice Studio Handbook—A Practical Guide To All Aspects Of Teaching*. Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard Corporation.
- Blanchard, B. & Acree, C. (2007) *Making Music And Enriching Lives: A Guide For All Music Teachers*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Vocal Literature

Magazine:

- Crayton, Mark. (November, 2009). "An Ornamented Life". *Classical Singer: 54*

Books:

- Dayme, M. & Vaughn, C. (2007). *The Singing Book*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Elliot, Martha. (2008). *Singing In Style: A Guide To Vocal Performance Practices*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Kimball, Carol. (2006). *Song: A Guide To Style And Literature*. Seattle, WA: Pst...Inc.
- Meister, Barbara. (2000). *An Introduction To The Art Song: A Guide To Listening Pleasure*. New York: Taplinger Publishing Company.
- Osborne, Charles. (1985). *The Concert Song Companion: A Guide To The Classical Repertoire*. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, Inc.

Project #3 – Present Your Teaching

This project requires you to video record three lessons.

- It is recommended that you regularly video record your lessons with this student for at least 4 weeks before you video record the first lesson for this project. This will help you and your student become accustomed to the presence of the recorder and will ensure the camera is placed at the best angle for viewing and hearing the lesson (a separate microphone is recommended). Be sure to place the camera where the viewer can see the student's body and the face of both the student and teacher. The music does not need to be shown in the video.
- Reviewing the recordings will give you excellent feedback on your teaching approach before you submit the video.
- If you do not own a video recording device in good working order, we recommend you contact colleagues or the families of your students to borrow one for this project.
- It might be helpful to have a parent or student assistant help you during the recording process, particularly if you plan to include movement in the lesson.
- It is recommended that you refer to these articles on the [MTNA Certification website](#), which address successful video recording in the studio.
- Your student or his or her parent/guardian must sign the [Authorization and Release](#) form to submit with this project.

1A–C: Your video recordings will be evaluated using the following guidelines:

Lesson One: Introductory phase

- Gave an appropriate introductory presentation of the song
- Provided clear directions in the lesson and instructions for practice
- Used appropriate supplementary activities (for example, theory, sight reading, vocalises and exercises)
- Kept the lesson on task with good teacher/student communication

Lesson Two: Intermediate phase

- Used appropriate responses to the student's stage of learning; assessed and responded to the student's understanding of the teaching points.
- Provided clear directions in the lesson and instructions for practice
- Helped the student incorporate correct stylistic interpretation (for example, articulations, dynamics, rubato and the like.)
- Kept the lesson on task with good teacher/student communication

Lesson Three: Final phase

- Helped the student achieve an acceptable level of performance (for example, fluency, freedom, resonance, intonation, breathing, diction, communication and artistry)
- Assessed and responded to student's understanding of teaching points
- Helped the student incorporate correct stylistic interpretation (for example, rubato, dynamics)
- Kept the lesson on task with good teacher/student communication

2A: The evaluators will be checking to make sure you included an outline or synopsis of your lesson and a list of all of the materials you used during the three lesson segments you recorded. Your lesson outline should not be a "lesson plan" you carefully followed through the lesson, but rather a synopsis of what you did in the lesson.

2B: The evaluators will be grading on thoughtfully written self-evaluations from each lesson, and will be checking to see that each evaluation discussed at least three points from the given list (300 words maximum per evaluation). Questions that they may ask themselves could include:

- Did the teacher appear to have watched the recording of the lesson before writing the self-evaluation?
- Did the teacher appear to recognize obvious strengths or weaknesses that the evaluator observed on the teaching video?

2C: Looking at your goals for this student, the evaluators will be checking:

Repertoire:

- Do the goals seem appropriate and realistic for this student?
- Do the goals represent a well-rounded approach to repertoire?

Theory:

- Are these goals appropriate and realistic for this student?
- Do these goals complement and reinforce the repertoire?

Technique:

- Are these goals appropriate and realistic for this student?
- Do these goals represent a healthy and musical use of the mechanism, and will this technical work help the student sing the repertoire with good technique?

2D: The evaluators will look for your documentation of three teaching assessments. These assessments do not have to be limited to the student in the recorded lesson segments.

3: When viewing the recording of your performance the evaluators will be looking at and listening to how you:

- Sang with good technique, accuracy, fluency and musicality
- Incorporated correct stylistic interpretation (for example, articulations, diction, dynamics and the like)

Project #4 – Share Information About Your Teaching Environment

In this project you are asked to describe (150 minimum to 300 maximum words) how you encourage a positive teaching environment in your studio. You will be expected to document at least three resources you use to promote this positive environment and describe how you use each resource you document.

1. The evaluators will be looking for a competent description of how you encourage a positive teaching environment. Possible ideas may include the following:

- Is your studio neat and organized with attractive décor?
- Do you post photos of students and their musical achievements for others to see?
- Are your instruments in good playing condition?
- Do you use incentive charts to aid in developing good practice habits?
- Do you use games for reinforcing music theory or music history concepts?
- Do you use computer software for students to practice theory skills?
- How else do you encourage and motivate your students?

2. Evaluators will check to see if you have documented at least three of the resources you use to promote this positive teaching environment. You may use photos or video recordings of the resources.

The evaluators will also check to see that you gave a sufficient description of how you use the resources you documented in #2. (50 minimum to 100 maximum words for each of the three resources.)

Project #5 – Discuss Your Studio Business Ethics and Policies

1 A–C: This project asks you to apply ethical business practices to scenarios dealing with students in the studio or classroom, their family members and your professional colleagues. It is recommended that you consult the [MTNA Code of Ethics](#).

The evaluators of your Teacher Profile Projects will grade your answers based on the following expectations:

- A. Scenario 1: States a clear, ethical approach to dealing with this student.
- B. Scenario 2: States a clear, ethical approach to dealing with this colleague
- C. Scenario 3: States a clear, ethical approach to dealing with this parent

2-A: The evaluators will be checking to make sure you have included the standard elements of an effective studio/classroom policy, including information on fee structures and payment plans (actual fees do **not** need to be included.)

2-B: The evaluators will be looking for a list of standard questions and activities used in an interview with a new student and family members, **and** a separate list of questions and activities for a transfer student and family member(s),

2-C: The evaluators will expect to see standard income and expenses listed in your typed hypothetical annual budget for an average studio/classroom. If you are a salaried music teacher or a college/university pedagogy student (rather than an independent studio teacher), prepare a prototype budget for the studio/classroom.