

CHAPTER 3

Stages of Development



T-CD 1 Track #7

If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again.

—English Proverb

Whether child or adult, if you are a singing novice, have memory deficit, are musically “map-less,” or come from a different musical culture, there are stages you will go through on your way to develop your mind’s ear and your ear’s voice—the team that makes up your “Voice’s Musical Ear.” *Tune Your Voice* is designed to take you through these stages and on to more enhanced audiation & reproduction skills. Here are a few helpful things to know.

The brain learns music at various stages.⁴ If you have children, generally from 5 months prior to birth, to age 9 thru 12, is when the brain has the most available “receptors” for music just waiting to be “plugged in.” If these are not used for music, they will go towards other uses in the brain. After age 12 it takes longer to learn. Our singing novice and our map-less singers were probably not exposed to music patterns, especially sung music, during their early lifetime, or were told to “mouth the words” when everyone else was singing so they never got a chance to work it out.

5 months pre-birth to 2–4 years, including your whole life, is an **Acculturation** process. As you hear music, it seeps into your audio learning centers in your brain. It is important to listen to a lot of simple instrumental music at first. Sing and chant without words during this stage to allow the brain to build a bigger library of music patterns rather than building more language vocabulary. Use the syllables “*Bah*” for melodic and “*Bup*” for rhythm patterns.

From 2 years old to 5 you begin an **Imitation** process of what you have been hearing. Most adults are able to imitate but some cannot because most likely they were not exposed to much music at an early age when the brain is more receptive to music—up to age 9 or 12. You can learn to match pitch and learn to audiate after that age but it just takes a little longer. You will get the help you need from experiencing this program.

From age 3–6 is the **Assimilation** process. Here you have been collecting a larger vocabulary of sounds with which you can begin to audiate. This program offers many examples to assimilate from basic to somewhat advanced listeners & reproducers.

This does not mean it takes six years to audiate. In my experience with my adult students, I've seen it take on average, less than a year. It just depends on how much time was spent at it and how many of the causes for poor pitch matching a person has. If you are you ready to step up to a new musical experience, let the fun begin.

⁴ Edwin E. Gordon, “Music Play” –The Early Childhood Music Curriculum Guide for Parents, Teachers and Caregivers. ©1998 by GIA Publications, Inc., Chicago, IL ISBN: 1-57999-027-4

CHAPTER 5

The 12 Tones



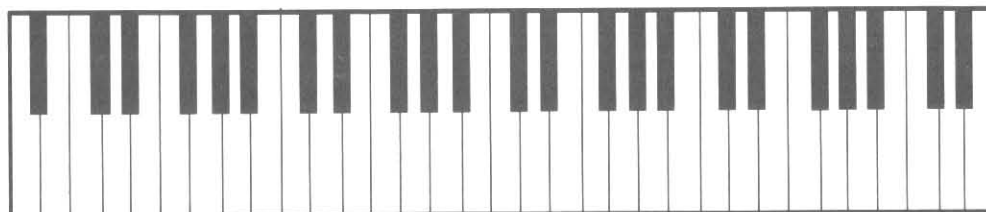
T-CD 1 Track #8

There are twelve **tones**, also called **notes**, in our Western tonal vocabulary. They are called, A, B, C, D, E, F, G (the white keys on a piano). The other notes (the black keys on a piano) are called C \sharp or D \flat , D \sharp or E \flat , F \sharp or G \flat , G \sharp or A \flat , A \sharp or B \flat . Two different names for the same pitch is called an **Enharmonic Equivalent**.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
B \flat A \sharp			D \flat C \sharp		E \flat D \sharp			G \flat F \sharp		A \flat G \sharp		B \flat A \sharp
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	A	B				
	C \flat	B \sharp		F \flat	E \sharp							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9				

The symbol (\sharp) is called a **Sharp**. It means to make a note go a **Semitone** ($\frac{1}{2}$ Step) higher (to the very next note to the right on the piano) and the symbol (\flat) is called a **Flat**, and means to make the note go a semitone ($\frac{1}{2}$ step) lower (to the very next note to the left on the piano).

The $\frac{1}{2}$ Step or **Semitone** is our closest distance between two notes in Western music culture and we will learn more about whole tones or whole steps, semitones or $\frac{1}{2}$ steps, sharps and flats in the next chapter. For now, focus your attention on getting acquainted with the sounds of the twelve different tones but also take a look at the keyboard image below to understand this basic concept of where these tones “live” in relationship to each other. This may help you with understanding the aural spatial relationships necessary in building your internal musical “road map” and having your voice follow the map. Referring to the keyboard image, especially in the beginning, will help you to see how far your voice has to go.



All notes sung or played have a wavelike energy called **Vibration**. All notes vibrate at different frequencies or rates of speed, which is what gives the note its sound. The diagram on waveforms shows a broad-strokes demonstration of vibration.

Some people believe that each note has a special energy or sound color to it. As you listen to each note, try to go “into” the note and be aware of what it means to you