



10 Tips for Teachers- To help you through the rest of the school year.

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Are you aware that, of all professions, teachers are at the greatest risk for voice disorders? Vocal injury can negatively affect job performance, attendance, and satisfaction. As you embark on these final months of teaching before summer break, take a moment to “check in” with your voice. Here are 10 tips to help you through the rest of the school year:

1. Stay well hydrated. Be sure to drink some water before you leave the house and then sip water throughout the school day. (You might even find benefit from steaming, a means of direct hydration.)
2. Consider doing some gentle vocalizing in the morning – lip trills, vocalizing through straws (straw phonation), gentle humming. If you complete them in the shower you will have the bonus of breathing in hot steam at the same time! Multitasking!
3. Be mindful of your posture as you teach. Do some body stretches before you start your day.
4. Take a look at your classroom setup. Are you finding yourself calling out to the back of the room? Perhaps arranging your students in a different setup – small groups, around the perimeter of the room, and/or walking around the class as you teach could be helpful.
5. Incorporate visual aids into your lectures. Many students are visual learners and will benefit from visual aids.
6. Give yourself vocal breaks. Stagger your teaching with student presentations, questions, discussion, and projects. Pause throughout your lessons to allow the students to process new information.
7. Use non-vocal means for behavioral control and for gaining attention. Switch the lights on and off! Clap your hands! Ring a bell! A gong would certainly get students’ attention!
8. Avoid throat clearing! Take small sips of water to reduce the urge to throat clear.
9. Consider amplification. There are a number of different amplification systems at varied technological levels and price points that may be suitable – some which are worn on-person and some which are setup within the classroom. In some instances, the school district may be willing to provide one for you.
10. Monitor your NON-TEACHING voice use. Are you in noisy places often in the evenings and on weekends? Are you singing loudly on the car ride home? Maybe your voice needs a little rest to help you get through the week.

If you find yourself becoming vocally fatigued or hoarse on a regular basis, consider seeing a laryngologist to be sure that your vocal folds are healthy. The doctor might refer you for voice therapy, which will help teach you how to use your voice healthfully with less physical effort. Feel free to contact our team for more tips!