

## VENTRILOQUISM: How you do it, and "free" Routines.

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There are only a few letters in our alphabet that we have to move our lips on. (Only a few in Spanish also, by the way.) So a Ventriloquist (Vent.) learns these changes. This information can be found in a "good" encyclopedia and will go into great detail.

Let me make it easy for you. We move our lips on letters "B", "F", "P", "M", "V", and "W". To not move your lips and give the impression your dummy or puppet is talking; you need to make these changes. The letters that **do** require lip movement are replaced by letters that **do not** require lip movement. For example if I wanted to say "Bonnie", I would change this word to "D"onnie. (Try it now) In a sentence it sounds the same as "Bonnie". Suppose I wanted to say, "Funny". I would say "TH"unny. Piano would be "T"iano. Money would become "N"oney. "Very" becomes "TH"ary. So now you can say "TH"ery "Thunny", but if you say it right it sounds like "very funny" but you don't have to move your lips. Also "who" becomes "Ooh". Practice this in a mirror.

Now you say, "That's all fine, and good, but I still can't throw my voice." No, I'm sorry you can't, but neither can anyone else in the world. Remember ventriloquism is a part of magic. It's a trick or illusion. We are into the "pretend" world in ventriloquism. Everyone loves to pretend, even adults. I even tell the kids this sometimes, "What we are doing right now is pretend." The reason I do this is so they don't think it is real. I always want to be truthful. They still love seeing ventriloquism being done even when they know it is pretend. (Note: little ones may become frightened, so be tactful.)

One of the most important things to remember is that, throwing your voice is an illusion. This happens because you are not moving your lips but a voice is still being heard. (That is if you have practiced so well in the mirror the changes in the sounds that you can in fact say the words without moving your lips.) One thing you can practice saying are the vowels: AEIOU. By – the – way, you do have to open your lips a little bit. At a distance your lips will just look like they have a shadow on them. Don't worry if your lips move a little, all "Vents" have some lip movement. Your audience will be so busy watching your dummy or puppet; they won't notice your lips moving a little. To recap, B=D, F=TH, P=T, M=N, V=TH, W=OO. The "oo" is substituted for the letter

"W" in a word, but by itself in the alphabet it is pronounced "duggulu".

The important thing is the distraction you have (your dummy or puppet). You see its mouth is moving, and yours is not, so people will watch him or her mostly. Think about how a TV works. Do the words come out of the mouth of the people speaking, or out of the speaker beside the screen? Think about it -- the TV is really a ventriloquist, and you didn't know it! Tell me, do you enjoy watching TV? Do you think about where the sound is coming from? No, you just enjoy watching it happen. The same is true of ventriloquism.

Then there is something else you can learn from your TV set. The words are synchronized with the lip movement. We move our lips once for every syllable of every word. You will need to get

use to moving your puppet or dummy's mouth once for every syllable of every word he or she says. It makes it so much more believable when you do this. Can you ever remember seeing people doing puppets where they didn't synchronize the words? It probably wasn't too fun to watch, because it didn't seem natural. So again you will need to practice in front of the mirror. (You and the mirror are going to become very good friends!)

Now that you have mastered these things, don't make me laugh, no "Vent" has ever mastered anything yet. They went out there, and had fun trying to trick people with their foolishness. You know people love to pretend so they will love what you are doing. Throw yourself into the character you choose and think what they would act like and keep them in character at all times. You will want to think of a voice different from your own, one that will go with the character. It should probably be higher or lower than your own voice. Now go be daring and give it a whirl, and take some of that boredom out of the classroom.

I would think that one of the biggest battles teachers must face in school is in the area of boredom. It would be nice if children all loved school, and came eager to learn. We know; though, that all children are not excited about school. In fact, if you were to take a vote on those who would like the doors of the school to close forever, you might get a few takers.

My philosophy of teaching is that we as educators, if we are to get our message across, we must do it in an interesting way. Yes, we do have a captive audience to a certain extent, but the day will come when our "captives" may escape if we have not reached his/her interests. Someone has said, "Even though a child is sitting in the room, his mind might be out to lunch." Let's never forget this, and try to capture kid's minds not only their bodies.

In order for real lasting learning to take place in schools we must have attention. You gain attention through interests. What are kids interested in? You know they like magic, puppets, and ventriloquism; so why not be brave and try it at your school. God Bless You as you use your newfound tool for the Lord!