

# Speech Power

## Choral Speech





# Victoria College of Music and Drama, London Ltd

*Founded 1890*

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# Choral Speech Syllabus

Member of



## ABOUT THE VCM

Victoria College of Music, London, is an independent body providing examinations in Music, Speech, and Drama subjects. It has held examination sessions throughout the British Isles and certain overseas countries since it was founded in 1890. It no longer operates a full-time teaching institution.

Further details about Victoria College can be found on our website:

**www.Vcmexams.com** and you can follow us on Twitter and Facebook.

## PASS MARKS

Introductory Grades	65%
Grades 1 to 8	65%
with Merit	80%; with Distinction 90% Merit is shown as % Honours+in Ireland
Medal examinations	75%
Diplomas	75% (85% with Honours)

## ABOUT THIS SYLLABUS

This syllabus has been compiled using the popular strengths of its predecessors, and takes into account views and suggestions of teachers and advisers.

## CHANGES TO SYLLABUS

VCM examination requirements do not alter annually, the current syllabus is that listed on our website.

Any changes to the syllabus are announced well in advance on the College website, on Facebook and Twitter.

## COMPARISONS WITH OTHER EXAMINATION BODIES

VCM Grades 1 to 8 are intended to compare on a level for level basis with the grades 1 to 8 of other similarly recognised examination boards. In addition to Grades 1 to 8, VCM examinations are available at several introductory levels prior to Grade 1 as a means of encouraging beginners, or students with special needs. Medal and Diploma examinations are also available in all subjects. Candidates at all levels receive a written report and, if successful, a certificate or diploma.

## REGULATIONS

All entries are accepted on the conditions laid down in *General Regulations and Information*, a copy of which is available free of charge. It is also on our website: [www.vcmexams.com](http://www.vcmexams.com)

### **Own choices**

Scope has been left deliberately broad to allow for a wide range of own choice material. Teachers are encouraged to involve students as much as possible in the choice of pieces in order to give them a feeling of ownership of their work. While prescribed pieces are mainly of a traditional nature, there is no reason why own choices should not include modern material from less conventional sources.

### **Copies**

Candidates must bring copies of the works being performed for the use of the examiner. This need not necessarily be a second copy of a book, especially when cost is a factor: many teachers encourage candidates to copy out works, preferably using word-processors, as part of the learning process. Photocopying should be avoided and copyright law must not be broken.

### **Essays, projects, dissertations, folios, etc.**

These must be typed, word-processed, printed or neatly written. A statement signed by the teacher should certify that the work is wholly that of the candidate. Heavy binders should be avoided as essays are sent through the post and are photocopied for examiners' use. Marks are not awarded, essays are either Approved or Not Approved. Those whose essay is Not Approved but who receive a pass mark in the practical examination, may resubmit a revised essay within two years. The essay resubmission fee (see fee table) is payable in these circumstances.

### **Sight reading, impromptu work, etc.**

Where the syllabuses specify Unseen Sight Reading as a requirement, this will be handed to the candidate during the examination. Sufficient time will be given for the candidate to read through it before being asked to attempt. Impromptu work - as opposed to sight reading - will be handed to the candidate before the examination by the person acting as steward on the day in time for the candidate to make notes and prepare. Candidates taking examinations that include impromptu work should therefore arrive in good time.

### **Costume and make-up**

If candidates choose to use costume and or make-up the examiner will give credit for the effort involved rather than the material quality of the costume, props, make-up etc. See Equal Opportunities statement in *General Regulations and Information*.

### **Choices**

The College is always willing to look over proposed programmes submitted well in advance and give guidance where necessary.

### **EXAMINERS**

On occasions, two examiners may be present for purposes of Moderation or Training.

# Choral Speech

*What the examiners will be looking for:*

Sense of unity

Good memory and synchronisation

Good contrasts between pieces presented

Vitality in interpretation

Interesting presentations

Good grooming and appearance

Flexibility and variety of voice production, tone, range and volume, rhythm, pace and phrasing.

Expressive features and general overall effect.

Characterisation where appropriate

All members must participate including at those points where solo lines or group lines are included.

The various themes listed in certain grades are merely suggestions and may be freely interpreted.

Teachers may ~~conduct~~ the choir if they wish, but this should be unobtrusive, and well-rehearsed. Senior choirs could well be led by a member of the choir, not necessarily the same student for each item.

Examination fees: the examination fee per choir is twice the fee for the corresponding solo Grade regardless of the number in the choir.

Choral Speech examinations are available in five Grades: the first two are intended specifically for younger, primary school pupils; the other three are for middle school and secondary school pupils and for teenage/adult choirs

Where more than one choir is entered for the same Grade, they should be labelled Choir A, Choir B, etc. The teacher may be present and, particularly for the first two Grades, may ~~conduct~~ the choir(s)

Effects - noises, instruments, etc. may be used where appropriate but are not essential.

Discreet use of hand gestures is encouraged

Size of choir: a minimum of eight and a suggested maximum of twenty/twenty-four, but not more than thirty.

~~Own Choice~~ may include an excerpt from a longer poem.

## Grade II

Show on entry forms as:

SURNAME	FORENAMES	SUBJECT	GRADE
		CS	II

A short narrative poem.

A short own choice poem which must provide a contrast to the above.

## Grade IV

A ballad or other short narrative poem

A short own choice poem which must provide a contrast to the above

## Grade VI

Any suitable Psalm

An own choice on a humorous theme, verse or prose

## Grade VII

A Bible passage other than from the Psalms

A prose passage about the Sea or a Journey

A modern poem of own choice

## Grade VIII

A chorus from a verse drama

A prose passage about Travel, the Supernatural or an Adventure

A poem of own choice whose theme must provide a contrast to both the above

### Choral Speech

Marks:

Recital	80
Choice of material	10
Presentation	10
	100

To Pass: 65; with Merit 80; Distinction 90

Merit is shown as Honours in Ireland