

DO RE MI

Character: Voice teacher and student (double role).

(Teacher) Now, Sylvia, do you know the first thing you must have in order to sing like a bird?

(Student) *Feathers?*

(Teacher) No, no, you must learn to *breathe*.

(Student, puzzled) I have to take lessons for *that*?

(Teacher) Watch me! (breathe heavily) There! Can you do that?

(Student) I do *that* every time I run upstairs.

(Teacher) Now, then, I want you to *sing like a bird!* Try it!

(Student, flap arms as wings) Quack quack quack!

(Teacher) No, no, no!

(Student, flap arms) Cluck cluck cluck!

(Teacher) No!

(Student, in questioning tone) Gobble gobble gobble?

(Teacher) Please, Sylvia, *not* a farmyard fowl. I want you to sing like a wild bird!

(Student, wildly flap arms, utter wild screeches) Chirp chirp chirp chirp chirp!

(Teacher, sighing) Maybe we'd better start with the scale. I want you to start very low and end up very high.

(Student) Like this? (crouch, gradually rise as you sing up scale, stand on tip-toe on final *do*) Do . . . re . . . mi . . . fa . . . sol . . . la . . . ti . . . do!

(Teacher, dismayed) Well, *something* like that. Try going down the scale.

(Student, start on tip-toe, end up with head on floor) Do . . . ti . . . la . . . sol . . . fa . . . mi . . . re . . . do!

(Teacher) Sylvia, I want you to imagine that you are making your debut at the opera. *Thousands* of people are watching you!

(Student, look fearfully out, cover face with hands, scream in fright) Eeeeeeeck! (uncover face) I'm *scared* of all those people!

(Teacher) Don't be afraid. Remember that you must be *happy* when you sing. I want you to sing *happily* up and down the scale. Instead of *do re mi* I want you to sing *ha ha ha* . . . like *this* . . . (illustrate by singing *ha ha ha* up the scale)

(Student, up scale) Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha (down the scale) ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha.

(Teacher) That's fine, but I want you to be even *more* happy. Pretend that I just told you a very funny joke.

(Student) A funny joke? Okay. (laugh, up scale) Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha (increase laugh, down scale) ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha (increase laugh, almost hysterical, up scale) ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha (increase in hysterical laughter, down scale) ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha. (in total hysterical laugh, up scale) ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha (laugh hysterically, stagger about) ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha . . .

(Teacher, puzzled) What's so funny?

(Student, laughing) Ha ha ha . . . that sure was a funny joke you told me!

(Teacher, impatient) But I didn't *really* tell you a joke.

(Student, frowning, to self) Then what am I laughing at?

(Teacher) I don't know. For today's final lesson I want you to *hold a note*.

(Student, cup hands, glance back and forth at them) With both hands?

(Teacher, sigh) No—no hands. Well, that concludes our little voice lesson for today. For homework I want you to practice singing in the closet.

(Student, frowning) In the closet? But no one will hear me!

(Teacher, smiling kindly) I know, dear, I know.