

RECORDING THE HUMAN VOICE



Est. Time: 60-90 minutes

Subjects: General Music, STEAM

Age Range: Middle & High School


See the full lesson [here!](#)

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What feelings can the human voice express as a musical instrument, and how can experimenting with recording technology affect how the voice is perceived?

In this lesson you will:

- Explore how the human voice is a musical instrument that expresses emotion
 - Compare and contrast different technical tools to affect the sound of a recorded voice
 - Experiment with recording your own voice
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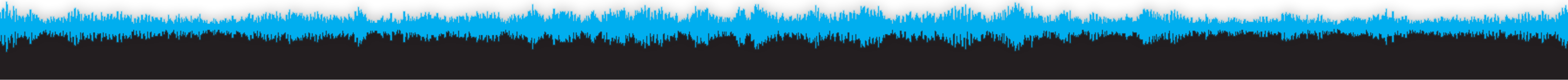


RECORDING A VOCAL PERFORMANCE

Watch [this video](#) of Blues singer and guitarist Bonnie Raitt commenting on recording a vocal performance.



Consider or ask a friend:

- Do you sing? How often?
 - Are there specific times when you sing? What might be reasons for you to sing?
 - Do you think singing is a more personal musical expression than playing a guitar or drumset? If so, why?
 - What are the various emotions you can express by singing?
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EXPRESSING VULNERABILITY WITH THE RECORDED VOICE

Watch [this video](#) detailing how the recorded voice can express vulnerability and be the representation of an artist's uniqueness.



Using an app (voice memo or record) on your phone, record yourself:


- Reading an excerpt from a book of your choice into a voice memo app (substitute a poem or other writing of your choice)
- Singing a few lyrics from a song of your choice into a voice memo app. Make sure that your voice conveys the emotion of the words and lyrics you choose.

Listen to your recordings and share them with a partner or a group if possible.

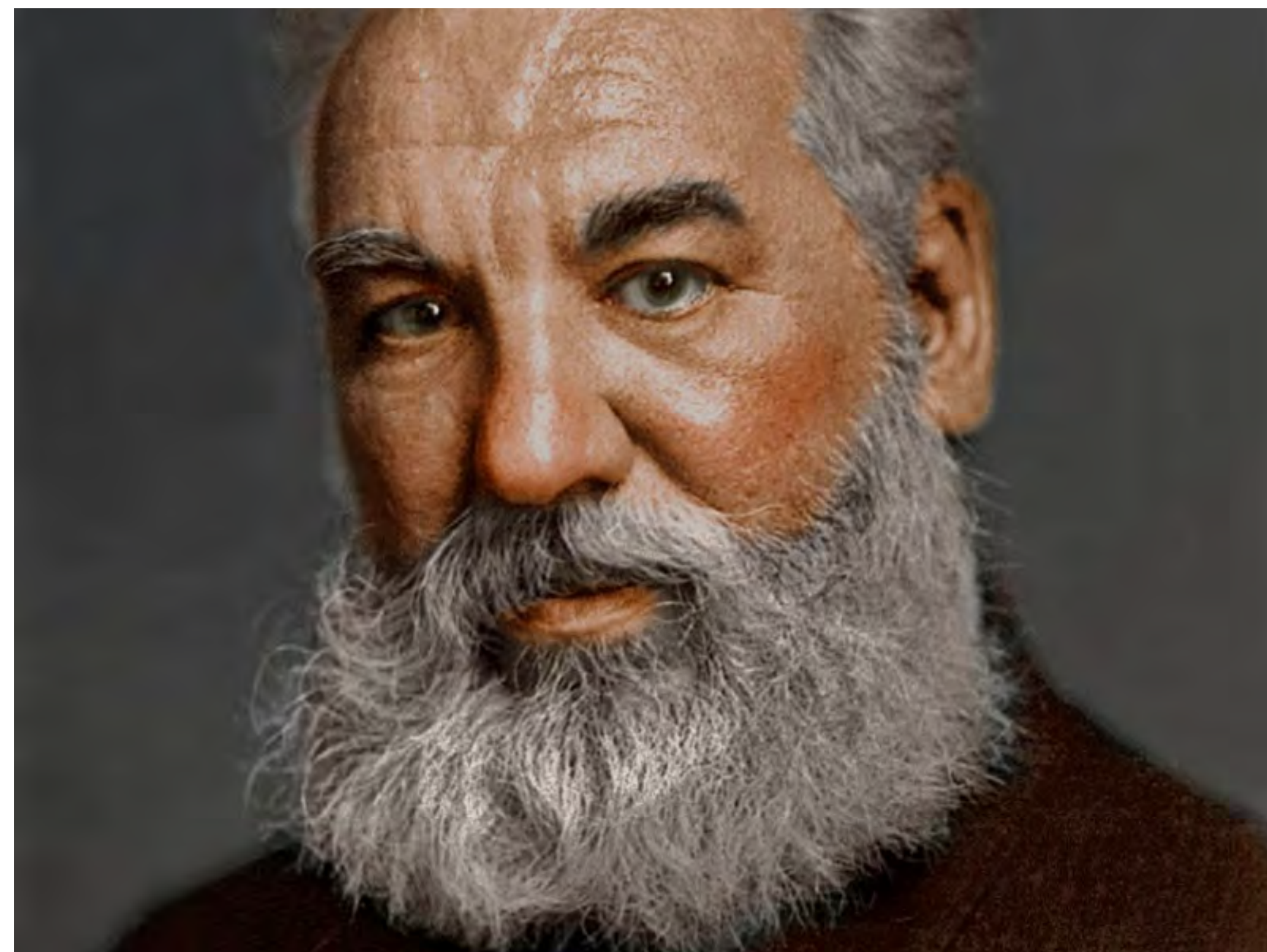




Consider or ask a friend:

- Did your speaking voice sound like you expected it to?
 - Did your partner or the group have a sense of the emotions you were expressing? Why or why not?
 - Did your singing voice sound like you expected it to?
 - Did your partner or the group have a sense of the emotions you were expressing? Why or why not?
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- Alexander Graham Bell was granted the first telephone patent on March 7, 1876.
- Early microphone technology evolved from the invention of the telephone.
- Apple introduced a voice memo app with the iPhone OS 3 in 2009.
- Google introduced a new Recorder app in 2019.



SUMMARY

- Singing can be a powerful artistic medium for expressing emotion
- Early microphone technology evolved from the invention of the telephone
- The human voice can be simply captured with the use of a voice memo app



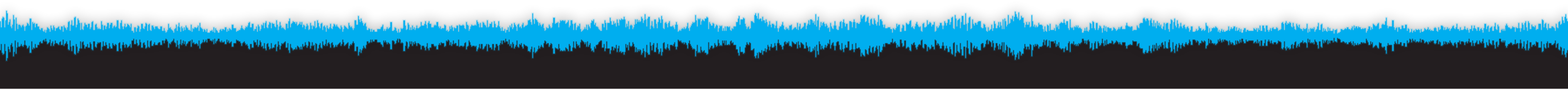
BE CREATIVE

Explore all the characteristics captured when recording your singing voice in different spaces.



BE CREATIVE

First, find a few spaces around you that sound noticeably different when you clap your hands. For example, observe how a bathroom sounds in comparison to a closet. Write down your observations. Make sure to note the space and its sound characteristics, for example: “Bathroom = loud and ringing” or “Closet = quiet and dull.”



BE CREATIVE

Next, record your singing voice in those rooms and spaces by using your phone's voice memo app. Experiment where the phone is placed in relation to where you're standing. How does your voice sound when you're singing with the phone held close to you in a closet? How does it sound when it's placed on the other side of space from you? Write down your observations and be sure to note where you were in proximity to the phone.



BE CREATIVE

Now compare and contrast how the recording sounds in various spaces depending on HOW you are singing. For instance, how might your voice sound singing softly in a closet versus singing softly in a large space? Write down your observations, including your proximity to the phone and how you sang.



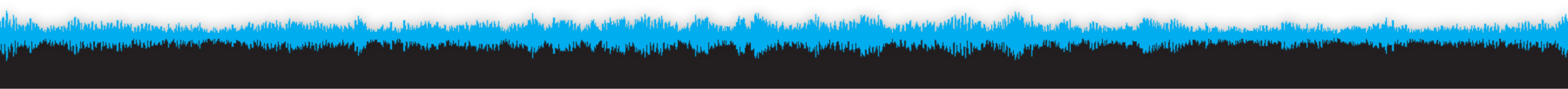
BE CREATIVE

Finally, share your recordings with a classmate or group. Ask them to guess what kind of space it was recorded in, and discuss how the recording reflects the interaction between your singing and the space you're performing in.



CONNECT

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