



# Private Lessons

Welcome to *The Speech Studio*

## ***The Speech Studio* Contact Information**

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**Studio: 2<sup>nd</sup> Level, 3136 Parsons Road NW, Edmonton, AB**

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## Program Information

Private Instruction offers personalized training in Public Speaking and Speech Arts. The one-on-one lesson provides the ultimate opportunity for growth and development.

Lessons can be booked Monday through Sunday and are based on availability.

The regular Studio year consists of 30 lessons (September – June) but students can sign up any time during the year. Lessons can be 30 minutes, 45 minutes or one hour in duration dependent on the age, experience, needs and interest of the student.

Placement in private lessons is arranged with the Studio Director, Shirley Konrad. Teachers vary from Junior to Advanced levels.

A fee schedule and/or teacher bios are provided upon request.

## Curriculum

Training in Speech Arts involves physical, intellectual, emotional, and artistic elements. The body houses the voice, which, in turn, responds to changes in thought and emotion, and comprises our *physical presence*. The mind and the emotions work in unison, enriching our experiences with literature and language. The use of drama enhances animation and fuels expressive energy. The voice responds to these elements, which enhance the communicator's ability to speak effectively.

**Classical to contemporary literature** is used as the medium through which the student explores the imagination and expression. Exposure to a wide range of literary works increases the student's understanding of the history of literature, and its contribution to society and the arts.

Instruction in **drama** develops the student's ability to create or recreate a character, to take and maintain a role, and to express mood and dramatic situation. Drama work includes acting, creative drama activities, solo scenes, monologues and duologues, and readers' theatre.

**Poetry and prose** are used to help the student study heightened language and storytelling. Students acquire the oral interpretive skills necessary to perform and speak these forms with understanding and artistry. Embedded in these studies is

instruction in both reading comprehension and developing the ability to lift meaning from the printed text.

The student explores physical expression through the silent art form of **mime**. Students learn to use their faces and bodies creatively in order to communicate feeling, thought, character, and story. The study of body language, including gestures, is an important component of physical expression.

Through classroom exercises, the student develops the necessary **voice production skills**, including breathing, articulation, and projection. Students also develop an awareness of the vocal health and hygiene necessary to maintain a healthy vocal instrument.

**Improvisation and impromptu speaking** enhance the student's ability to think creatively and spontaneously with confidence.

The student practices **sight reading** to learn the skills necessary to read any text with accuracy, expression, and meaning.

**Public speaking and effective communication** exercises help the student gain confidence in speaking directly and successfully to an audience. Through exposure to a variety of speaking situations and experiences, students develop the ability to speak confidently, whether from an originally researched and prepared outline or in the informal impromptu style.

**Theory study** supplements practical training and is offered to students with two or more years of practical training who are at the Grade 7 Speech Arts level or higher. Students study voice production, techniques of effective speaking, history of literature, and oral interpretation. Written exams are available to students who are taking practical exams at these higher levels. Theory requirements are discussed with interested students. Additional review lessons and a mock theory exam are offered to participating students to help them prepare for exams.

## Performance/Exam Opportunities

*The Speech Studio* is committed to providing a variety of performance opportunities for all students. This includes *SpeechFest*, Cookie Cabaret recitals and local festivals. We encourage students to take advantage of these wonderful opportunities.

*The Speech Studio* provides opportunities for students to take Speech Arts and Effective Communication examinations offered by the Royal Conservatory of Music (Toronto) and Trinity Guildhall (London, England). These exams are invaluable for providing feedback to students about their progress and skill level.

## ***The Speech Studio Director***

**Shirley Konrad, Director** • BFA, LMRC, ARTC, ATCL

Shirley Konrad is a graduate of the Bachelor of Fine Arts program (Drama) from the University of Calgary. She holds Associate Teacher's Speech Arts Diplomas from Mount Royal College (Calgary), the Royal Conservatory of Music (Toronto), and Trinity Guildhall (London, England). She also holds a Licentiate Diploma as a performer from Mount Royal College.

As Owner and Director of *The Speech Studio*, Shirley has been instrumental in developing the voices of hundreds of students. She has taught at colleges and schools throughout Alberta, instilling confidence, poise, expressive vocal skills, and dynamic presentational ability in all of the individuals with whom she works. In addition to being an actress and theatre director, Shirley conducts effective communication workshops throughout Western Canada.

Her innovative and energetic approach to her vocal work has made Shirley a well-respected festival adjudicator across Canada, and has earned her a distinguished position on the College Board of Examiners for the Royal Conservatory of Music (Speech Arts).

Shirley released her book, **A Vocal Invitation to Readers Theatre**, in 2001. This book focuses on developing the child's voice, and is a valuable resource for both teachers and parents.

As a result of her hard work, passion, and commitment to the spoken arts, Shirley has established a reputation for producing nationally recognized performers and first-class artists in this field. Shirley believes in nothing less than setting a high standard with all the work that is produced at the Studio.

Shirley feels gratified to witness the growth and enthusiasm of students who have spent years studying with her. Her students have gone on to become not only Speech Arts teachers throughout Canada, but also professionals in fields such as Acting, Law, Business, Education, and Health Care. These students have stated that the training they received at the Studio, which helped them become effective leaders and oral advocates, greatly contributed to success in their chosen vocation.











