

GRADE 7

DRAMA

Skills support

Vocal modulation is the way you use all the expressive qualities of your voice together to make it more exciting to listen to – pitch, pace, inflection, emphasis and pausing

Week 1 Use all the colours in your voice

Your voice is like a musical instrument. You can make it more interesting to listen to when you use vocal modulation and expression.

You can make use of:

- pitch, inflection
- pace
- pause
- volume
- emphasis
- tone colour



Figure 1.1
Greeting



Figure 1.2
Gossiping



Figure 1.3
Arguing

ACTIVITY 1 Pitch

This first exercise will help you to experiment with vocal pitch.

- Say the sentence below.
- Start with the lowest note you can reach with your voice; increase your pitch range so that you reach your highest pitch at the end of the sentence.
I can make my voice go higher and higher.
- Do the exercise again, using the sentence below, but this time, start at the highest note and work down to your lowest.
I can make my voice go lower and lower.

Warming up
(Topic 1)

Your teacher will select a warm-up from the Warm-up bank in this Learner's Book.

Referring to activity 1

Write three different sentences using exclamation mark, question mark, comma and full stop to show vocal modulation and expression.

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

ACTIVITY 2 Inflection

Inflection helps us to communicate what we want to say.

- When you ask a question, your voice goes upwards : How much is that?
- When you give a command, your voice goes down : No!
- When you are not sure of something, your voice could go up and down : I don't know!

Let us see how many different meanings we can give to a simple word.

- Stand in a circle.
- You are all going to use the word 'No'.
- One person begins and says the word.
- The next person says it with a different inflection pattern (for instance, as if she means 'Yes!', or as if she is surprised).
- Everyone in the circle has a turn.

Now that you have the idea, try this again with the following different words or phrases.

I don't know/Really/Hello/Goodbye

ACTIVITY 3 Pace

- Divide into pairs.
- Tell your partner a story. You can use a story you know very well. You may also make up a story.
- Change the **pace** as often as you can to make the story more interesting to listen to.
- You can also make use of **pitch** and **inflection**.
- Exchange roles. Your partner will have a turn to tell you a story.
- How could you both improve? Discuss this with you partner.

Key concepts

You would usually speak at a medium pace.

When you are excited, your pace is faster.

When you are telling a story, you sometimes slow your pace down to build suspense.

Some people speak at a fast pace. This makes it difficult for us to understand them because their articulation becomes weak.

Others speak so slowly that we become bored listening to them.

When we work on a script, poem or story, we need to vary our pace.

Warming up (Topic 1)

Your teacher will select a warm up from the Warm up bank in this Learner's Book.

Key concepts

We pause

- to take a breath
- to make the listener understand what we are saying
- when reading so that we have time to look ahead
- to create suspense when telling a story

Key concepts

The volume you use when speaking depends upon what you are trying to communicate. If you are angry, you could raise your voice. By changing the volume when you are speaking, you can make your voice more colourful and interesting to listen to.

Week 2 Pause, volume and emphasis

We are now going to learn about pause, volume and emphasis.

ACTIVITY 4 Pause

Read the following extract from a folktale aloud to a partner. Take note of how the pauses help to make the listener understand better.

Tortoise looked down. The world seemed very small from his position in the clouds. He looked carefully. Mrs Tortoise was carrying objects from the house and placing them on the ground.

'Ah!' proclaimed Tortoise, 'the birds have not let me down. They have done as I commanded'. He took a deep breath and counted to three. 'Onetwo.... three!' With all the force he could muster, he closed his eyes and ran towards the edge of the cloud. He jumped. For a while he felt like he was flying, but soon he started to head towards the ground at a tremendous speed. 'No need to fear' he thought 'for I have a soft landing ahead of me.'

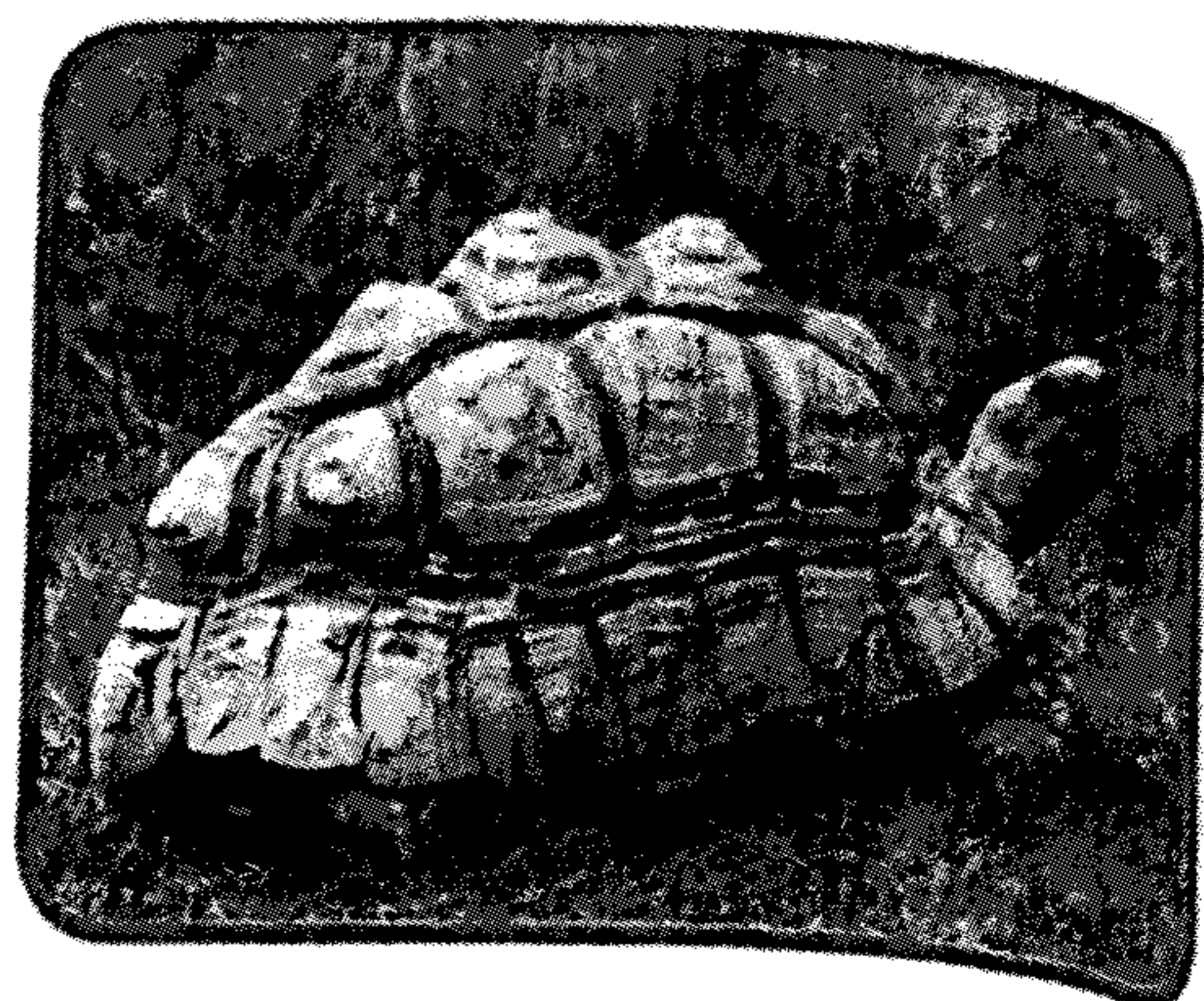


Figure 1.4 A tortoise with a multi-faceted shell

Tortoise was wrong. The birds had been so angered by his greedy behaviour that they had sent Mrs Tortoise the wrong message. They had told her to place all the hard objects from her home outside on the ground. He landed with a huge thud. His beautiful shell split into several tiny pieces.

(An extract from 'The Greedy Tortoise')

Notice that sometimes it is necessary to pause so that the sentence makes sense. Most times, we pause at full stops and commas. Remember to use a variety of pace when you read. You must also make use of different pitches and inflections.

ACTIVITY 5 Volume

Read the extract from Activity 4 again. This time, focus on changing your volume to give the extract more life.

Does this make a difference?

ACTIVITY 6 Emphasis

Read the sentence below. Emphasise the word in bold on each reading. Notice how the meaning of the sentence is changed.

- 1 Will **you** come to tea on Tuesday?
- 2 Will you come to **tea** on Tuesday?
- 3 Will you come to tea on **Tuesday**?

By stressing the different words, you will send a different message to the listener.

Make up your own sentences. Write them down.

Choose different words to emphasise each time you read them out. Your teacher may ask you to read your sentences out to the class.

Key concepts

Emphasis is the stress or importance you place on a word. By emphasising a word, you make it stand out.

You can do this in different ways:

- pause before an important word or phrase
- increase the volume of the word
- put stress on the word
- use a facial expression or gesture

Emphasis can change the meaning of a sentence.

ACTIVITY 7 Tone colour

Key concepts

Your feelings are heard in the tone of your voice. Your voice will have a different tone if you are :

angry	sad	a foreigner speaking with an accent
bored	telling a secret	gossiping about someone nearby
a robot	excited	

In pairs, read the following nursery rhyme to your partner, using the different tones listed above:

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall

Humpty Dumpty had a great fall.

All the king's horses, and all the king's men

Couldn't put Humpty together again.

(traditional nursery rhyme: source unknown)

Key concepts

Remember to use your breathing skills when doing vocal exercises.

i

Did you know?

Almost 70% of what we say is communicated by our vocal modulation, tone colour and body language.

Key words

- **expression** – the way you make your voice sound interesting
- **pitch** – the high, low or medium position of the voice on a musical scale
- **monotonous** – boring, lacking in variation
- **inflection** – the upward or downward direction of the voice
- **pace** – the speed at which you speak