

Why is my voice so tired?

As a teacher, your voice is your primary professional tool. Just for fun, let's consider how rigorously you use that performance tool as compared to another type of professional, for example, a pro bowler.

Let's imagine that a serious bowler plays a couple games each day, six days per week. In bowling, the actual set-up and release of the ball is pretty quick, with periods of inactivity while the bowler waits for the pins to reset, the ball to return or a competitor to perform. Thus, in an average game, the bowler may spend 10 minutes or so actually performing. If we calculate the bowler's performance time per week, we find that - out of the 10,080 minutes each week - the bowler performs about 120 minutes. To discover a bowler's rest to performance ratio, we divide non-performance time ($10,080 - 120$) by the performance time (120) . We find a rest to performance ratio of 83 to 1.

A teacher, on the other hand, usually works five days per week. Assume that a teaching day is 7 hours (420 minutes). [According to research, the average teacher speaks cumulatively about one full hour.] However, teaching younger children or subjects that require extensive speaking (i.e., foreign language teachers) usually requires more talking. If you coach or direct other extracurricular activities, factor those minutes also.

1. Estimate the number of minutes you spend speaking each working day and multiple it by 5 (working days). Subtract from 10,080 to discover your non-performance time = _____

2. Divide that number by your performance time = _____

3. Do the math (or grab a calculator). What's your ratio? _____

Most teachers find that they ask their bodies to significantly out-perform professional athletes.