Working with Pace

1. **Start with the breath.** Give yourself a few moments to check in with your diaphragmatic breathing. Feel the belly expand on the inhalation and retract in towards the spine on the exhalation.

2. **Wake up the face.** Allow all the muscles in the face to move around. Imagine that you are chewing thick spaghetti. Watch yourself in the mirror, and make note of any parts of the face that may not be responding.

3. **Establish a consistent rate of flow.** As you exhale, make a firm connection between your bottom lip and your top teeth. The sound will be a gentle “fff.” Make sure that the “fff” can be extended evenly and that the neck stays relaxed.

4. **Connect with vibration.** Allow the lips to touch while the jaw is relaxed (there will be a little bit of space between the teeth). Feel the vibration or buzz on the lips as you hum, “mmm.”

5. **Lengthen Vowels.** The speed of a word can be altered by lengthening your vowels. Begin intoning the vowels on their own so that you feel the shape of them: “mooooooo, meeeeee, maaaaaaa, maaayyyyy, mooooow.” Now add this awareness to your speech. Say, “hello” and allow the final, “owww” sound to extend. Try cutting the final “owww” sound short and notice the difference.

6. **Find the crisp clarity with your consonants.** Before you begin accelerating the speed of your speech, make sure that there is clarity with your consonants. Experiment with the sounds, “Tip, top, toe. Drip, Drop, Dro. Sip, sop, so. Lip, lop, low. Krip, crop, crow. Nip, nop, no. Zip, zop, zow.”

7. **Experiment your pace as you read.** Find an article from the newspaper and begin reading it very slowly, elongating the vowels. Then, speed up the pace at which you are reading, emphasizing the consonants. Decide which sentences (thoughts) would be best expressed slowly and which would be most effective speaking with quick precision.

8. **Play with music.** Choose a piece of music that you enjoy. Play the music while you read aloud. Notice how the rhythm effects your use of pace. When the music slows down, do you slow down? How does the addition of the music inform the choices you are making?
Working with Pace (Cont’d)

9. **Count to ten.** Begin counting to ten very slowly, with every number speed up slightly. If you begin with one, by the time you get to seven you should be speaking very quickly. Work your way back down, starting very quickly with the ten and becoming progressively slower so the by the time you reach one, the word is very slow and drawn out.

10. **Apply pace choices to your presentation or lecture.** Select a lecture or presentation that you will be giving. With coloured pens or pencils, clearly mark the areas that you would like to speed up and areas where you would like to slow down. Notice what differences these choices make in the delivery.