# We all love to sing!

► CD1 track 1 (performance); CD2 track 1 (backing) RESOURCES

Warm ups: Nos. 10, 20, 24

#### Information

This original Malay melody belongs to a song entitled 'Rasa Sayang', about familial love and the understanding and support given to Malaysian children as they begin to make their way in the world. Here, in English, children sing in chorus, united in their joy of the simple pursuit of singing. In each verse children pay respect to their first teacher, whoever that may be.

## Starting

- · Warm the voice by singing down and then up the scale of C major to 'la', 'ra', and 'sa', not too fast, and keeping the head still without tipping it up. Enjoy making a nice even sound. Imagine your eyebrows gently pulling up your facial features, keeping the scale in tune.
- When everyone is focused, sing upwards again, this time adding the words 'Win! Heads or tails we always sing!', holding the first note on 'Win!' for two beats. Now we've learnt the coda, which ends the song.

# Teaching and rehearsing

- · Demonstrate the opening chorus, singing at a steady tempo and using only two breaths. Encourage the group to sing it back to you, breathing in similar fashion. Open mouths wide, particularly on the words 'love' and 'Hey!'. The tune to the chorus consists only of crotchets and minims and should feel strong and even.
- Work through verse 1 phrase by phrase. Aim to manage the last two phrases in one breath. The verse comprises mostly quavers and crotchets—quicker note values than the chorus—and the syncopated rhythms have the effect of propelling the music forward. But don't rush, especially on the opening four-note chromatic phrase; this should be practised separately if necessary.
- Sing the chorus again and add some piano if you can. If not, try beating out the accompanying quavers from bar 10 on a small drum, to show the link to verse 2.
- Now practise verses 2 and 3 in the same way. If children are reading from a song sheet or from an overhead screen they will pick this up quickly; teaching the words by rote will take a bit longer. A helpful hint: the choruses use 'we' and the verses 'I'.
- Now challenge the group to put it all together, singing the whole song. Can they add the coda, learnt earlier?

#### Ideas

- When the song can be sung confidently by all members of the group, invite individual children to sing a line or two as a solo, each child thus adding their personal contribution.
- Experiment with dynamics to show that they really matter. Try choruses loud and verses soft, or perhaps the opposite—how does this change the overall effect?
- Take the last line of each chorus and make a chant: 'When we're winning we all sing! Win or lose we always sing! For our supper we shall sing! Heads or tails we always win!'. This chant will serve as an aide-memoire if children are learning the words by heart.

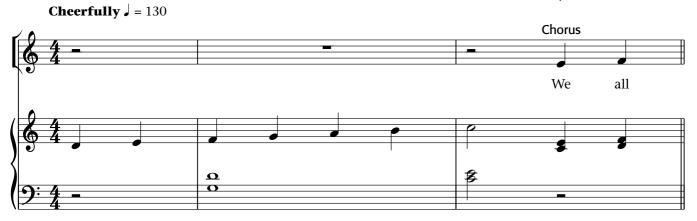
#### Listen out

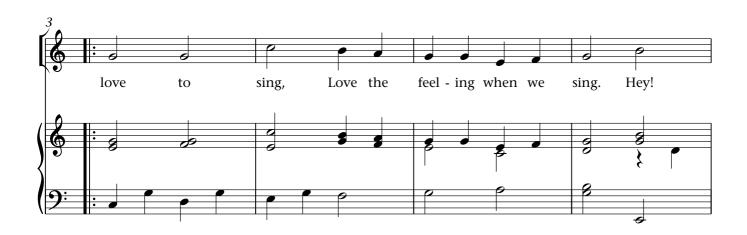
- Are the words being delivered with enthusiasm? Check that the chorus is sung really legato or smoothly, as this will help to generate a feeling of warmth.
- Make sure the upward scale at the end is in tune and that children have taken a large enough breath to support the top notes.

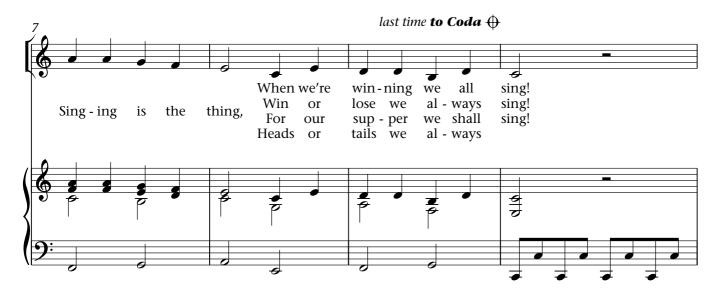
- This song is a good opener for any concert or presentation, but it could also be used to start the day, in a key-stage or school assembly.
- If soloists perform the verses, be aware of the balance with the accompaniment and keep everyone else totally silent and still. Remember that a rousing chorus must not be followed by an inaudible solo!
- The chant could be used as an introduction to the song.

# 1 We all love to sing!

### Trad. Malaysian melody Words/arr. Kevin Stannard









# School dinners

RESOURCES ► CD1 track 8 (performance); CD2 track 8 (backing)

Warm ups: Nos. 20, 32, 34

#### Information

'School dinners' comes from the imagination of the popular children's songwriter Alan Simmons, and the subject, presented here with a touch of humour, is as topical now as it has ever been. Each of the four musical lines has a distinct character, and there are plenty of words to chew over and choke on. This song will work unaccompanied but some piano would add solidity and musical depth, both in rehearsal and in performance.

# Starting

- Clap the rhythm to 'What did you have at school?' and, after the dotted-crotchet rest, ask the group to copy you rhythmically. Don't mention any words at this point. When this is perfect, do the same for the rhythm to 'What did you have for dinner today?', which is a beat longer.
- Play around with these two rhythms, then put the two phrases together in the right order and practise them. Explain that this is the rhythm of part 1.

## Teaching and rehearsing

- Following on from the 'Starting' exercise, teach part 1 there are only two notes and the rhythm repeats. ostinato style. Be cheerful and conversational as you ask the question.
- Demonstrate part 2, showing how it joins on to the end of part 1 by singing the last 'What did you have at school?' and then going straight into 'We started with'. You will have to go over the (unfamiliar) names of 'minestrone' and 'mulligatawny'—words that are rarely set to music!
- Go on to part 3 if the group is willing, or if necessary leave it until a later session. Sing the C at the top of the F major triad and show how the second and third phrases follow sequentially, descending a note at a time; children will pick up on this. Teach the last three notes carefully: this sounds like a bass-line, which outlines the closing cadence of the round.
- Teach part 4 which begins on A, the middle note of the F major triad. Sing long vowels: 'roobaarb, caarstaard', etc. The phrase beginning 'things we adore' moves stepwise, the only jump being between 'have' and 'more'. Go over this as necessary and make sure it is accurate; do it in a single breath if possible.
- Sing through parts 1–4 in sequence, as a unison song. Add some piano backing to help keep things steady, or tap dotted-crotchet beats.

• Finally, divide into four groups (A–D). Start by singing the song in unison, to remind the group of the intricacies of the song and ensure a strong opening. Then sing the song as a round, Group A starting first:

	Parts										
Group A Group B Group C	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4			
Group B	1	2	3	4		1	2	3	4		
Group C	1	2	3	4			1	2	3	4	
Group D	1	2	3	4				1	2	3	4

#### Ideas

- There are lots of interesting words to enjoy singing. Draw attention to words such as 'crisps', 'pop', 'bangers', and 'steak' by putting aside a few minutes to focus on consonants.
- Experiment with the dynamic level of each part and ask the children to decide what sounds best. As arbitrator, you might suggest that the words will be heard more clearly with a soft and light approach.
- Explain how opera works! When all the parts are spoken simultaneously it is impossible to hear what is going on; but when all the parts are sung together it is possible to 'tune-in' to each part and hear the words. Select a panel of listeners to prove this theory by listening to their peers first chanting the song, then singing it.

### Listen out

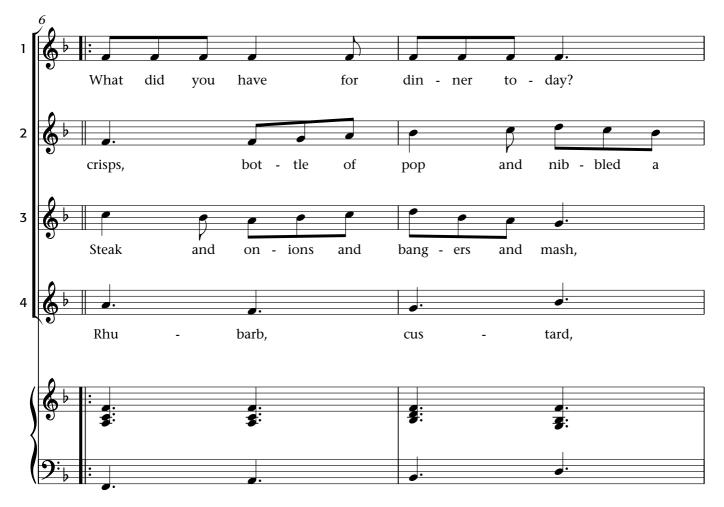
- · Listen carefully as you follow, or 'tail', each group from start to finish. You may have to remind certain individuals of the need to blend with their group.
- · Check for evenness in the texture. Is every word audible? Slow the tempo temporarily if you cannot hear all the words.

- When full four-part singing is established, fade out the piano so that listeners can appreciate the harmony and texture of the song a cappella. Bring back the piano towards the end to support groups C and D. It is good to vary the approach to performance and there is room for spontaneity.
- If you want to include the audience, invite them to join in with part 1—but rehearse it with them first. Too many performances are spoilt by bland invitations to 'sing along if you want'!

# **8** School dinners

#### **Words and Music: Alan Simmons**





Sing each part through in sequence.

# 14 Abiyoyo

RESOURCES ▶ CD1 track 14 (performance); CD2 track 14 (backing)

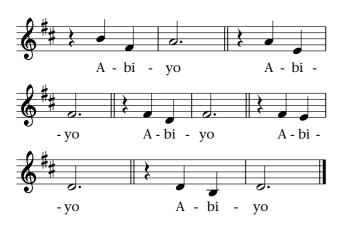
Warm ups: Nos. 10–12, 18, 21

#### Information

It is bedtime in a Bantu household and 'Abiyoyo', a soft and lilting lullaby, sounds out. The falling strain and soothing lyric gradually send the crying baby to sleep, comforted and reassured. 'Abiyoyo' works simply as an unaccompanied lullaby, or it may be sung with the simple harmony part and undulating accompaniment. The music is in B minor and uses notes of the pentatonic or five-note scale.

## Starting

- Tell the group what the song is about, to set the right mood.
- Exercise jaws by singing 'yo-yo', softly and rhythmically, to the notes of a descending pentatonic scale: B A F# E D B.
- Now sing these three-note motifs, which outline the shape of the melody. Sing each one to the group softly and smoothly, singing 'ah - be - yo' for 'Abiyo', and get them to respond. Click your fingers gently on the first beat of each phrase.



## Teaching and rehearsing

- Following on from the final 'Starting' activity, teach the song two phrases at a time, call and response style.
  Continue to click your fingers gently on the first beat of each phrase. The inbuilt repeat makes patterning the song straightforward, and your group should learn this rapidly.
- Now sing the song through together. Divide the group into two and let each group take the lead, in turn.
  Which group can sing the lullaby more beautifully?
- When everyone can sing the song confidently, join in singing the harmony part—very gently, but audibly.

- Gather a small group around you and challenge them to join in with you. Can they adopt the tune you are singing, essentially a harmony note lower than the main tune? This part would never be 'taught' in Africa.
- If this is successful, now teach the harmony part to the whole group, call and response style. Divide the group into two and sing the song through in two parts. Harmony singing is desirable but not essential. Never labour if a group is struggling. Just try again next time.
- When singing with the piano accompaniment or CD backing, ask the group to listen out for three (dotted-minim) beats in the bass and to watch for your signal to begin. Do this again before the repeat.

#### Ideas

- Use 'Abiyoyo' as a relaxing warm-down routine, particularly after strenuous musical activity. Its soothing effect could also be a remedy for overexuberant behaviour and help to regulate breathing.
- There is no point singing a lullaby loudly. Sing softly to begin with and even softer for the repeat.
- Can the group suggest how else this song might be used? Perhaps it could be an accompaniment to rowing a boat. Why is this so?
- For fun, ask your group to contrast the effect that No. 24 'Monster stomp' would have on a dozing infant!

#### Listen out

- Check that the vowels don't sound as in 'Abbey-owe'. Say 'Barbie doll' and aim for the same vowel sounds.
- The children must breathe and sing together as one, with good intonation and rhythm. No one wants to be responsible for keeping the baby awake through bad singing!
- Make sure the song does not sound lively.

# Performing

- Make sure children know who is singing the harmony part before they stand up to sing.
- Practise standing still for a few moments before beginning the song, and also at the end. Any movement will be a distraction.
- Encourage the audience to close their eyes to test the effectiveness of the singing. Afterwards, ask them if it worked.
- To extend any performance, insert a verse of humming between the two sung verses.

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# 14 Abiyoyo

Bantu lullaby arr. Kevin Stannard



# 16 Cape Cod chanty

**RESOURCES** 

► CD1 track 16 (performance); CD2 track 16 (backing)

Warm ups: Nos. 15, 20, 26

#### Information

This is a classic sea shanty, sung by sailors on the long voyage from Cape Cod in Massachusetts, USA, to the far-away south Australia. On the Internet you can find snippets of recordings by fierce-sounding sailors, with interesting variants on the words. Here is another strong tune built on the pentatonic or five-note scale and including call and response, but in this song the calls and responses are different. There are lots of interesting words and expressions and a two-part chorus. The final chorus is sung slower to provide a really stirring climax.

# Starting

- Explain the background to the song, and the image of sailors heaving on ropes on their long journey to Australia.
- Now teach the repeated phrases of the verses—'Heave away! Heave away!' and 'We are bound for Australia' call and response style.
- Sing verse 1 to the group; children will spot where these phrases slot in. Repeat, and get them to join in with these phrases.

# Teaching and rehearsing

- Work through the words and tune for each verse, using the notes of the D major chord on the piano to help with pitching. Explore and explain the meaning of any unfamiliar words or phrases.
- Now move on to the chorus and teach the tune (Part 2) for bars 11–12 and 15–16, which is the same both times.
- Introduce the slide on the words 'Go heave'. Count 1 2 3 and start on the fourth beat, grading the slide to reach the top D' on the first beat of the next bar, sliding evenly between notes. Children will enjoy doing this, so have some fun! Now sing the chorus together.
- Everything should now be in place for a rousing, unison version of the whole song. Try it through without stopping—don't be too fussy!—going back afterwards to correct any obvious mistakes.
- Repetition is important to cement learning, so make sure your group is really competent and confident before you suggest they sing in two parts. They will know there is more to learn if they have heard the CD.
- Teach everyone the harmony part (Part 1) as a distinct tune—the leap in bar 16 will need practice—and point out that the slide is the same in both parts, each time.
- Divide the group in two and have a go at the whole song. As before, don't stop at the first problem—keep

going. This time, pause on the D at the end of the final verse and, making sure everyone is watching you, slide into the final chorus which is performed slower (listen to the CD to hear how it should be done). Enjoy it!

#### Ideas

- The verses should be softer than the choruses. Every time the word 'heave' appears, make the music warmer by adding a crescendo.
- Different soloists could perform the 'call' for some of the verses. This will provide variety and is a good way to reward excellent singers.
- Add a suitable two-handed pulling movement to 'Heave away! Heave away!'. Talk about sailing ships, and how all hands were required to heave and haul the ropes controlling the sails at the masthead.
- Now add a suitable movement to 'We are bound for Australia!'—perhaps bringing one hand to the forehead as if scanning the horizon—and discuss who might have been sailing to Australia.

#### Listen out

- Can you hear every word? There is plenty to listen for, but look as well. Are mouths moving together like bows in the string section of a good orchestra?
- Make sure nobody is overdoing the slides. They add something to the song but only if done properly. Don't worry if the second slide begins on both A and D.
- Check that the middle syllable of 'Australia' is sung to an 'air' vowel sound. You don't need to sound Australian!

- Shanties are traditionally sung unaccompanied, but the support provided by piano or CD backing makes for a more accomplished sound.
- Consider adding the movements suggested above. Do you have any soloists who could sing some of the verses?
- Make sure you have rehearsed the tempo change for the last chorus, especially if you intend to perform with the backing track.

# 16 Cape Cod chanty



# **24** Monster stomp

► CD1 track 24 (performance); CD2 track 24 (backing) RESOURCES

► Warm ups: Nos. 13, 20

#### Information

We all respond to a strong beat and catchy tune and lyrics, and 'Monster stomp' leads us into a group of songs that convey important messages about the state of our environment. Children see and hear the news and will understand why we need to 'stomp out the bombs' (verse 4), and you might like to find an appropriate time to introduce this issue for class discussion. However, this song is also about enjoying being a monster—dancing and having fun-so don't shy away from involving movement. Let's 'free up' for this song! Also, given the relaxed atmosphere you are about to create, think about introducing peer assessment (see 'Ideas' below).

# Starting

- Stand in a circle and warm up by chanting the chorus. Beat it out and stomp like a monster, and move! Children will soon pick this up. Try clapping every time the word 'monster' occurs.
- Work on the 'uh ah' phrase at the end of the chorus: make loud guttural sounds, rhythmically. Here is a rare excuse to be loud and vulgar, so encourage your singers to sound like monsters.

# Teaching and rehearsing

- Children will learn the tune for the chorus quickly. With the group seated, sing it to them enthusiastically and introduce the idea of pitching the 'uh ah' sounds. Now sing it together.
- Sing verse 1 to the group, showing your enjoyment, and really snarl at the end. Practise the snarl with everyone. Who can do the best and fastest one? It needs to be fast, so the pick-up to the chorus isn't lost.
- Demonstrate how the verse joins to the chorus. Sing verse 1 to the group, and encourage them to join in on the chorus.
- · Now sing the rest of the song and encourage the children to sing the chorus each time. Make the song your own; e.g. in verse 3 make the word 'ugliest' sound really ugly. This does not need to be beautiful singing.
- Next, sing each verse together. Make sure the rhythms are snappy and enjoy interesting words like 'slime' and 'slither' that seldom feature in songs. Children might like to play with these words as they would relish a new taste experience; exaggerate them and enjoy them—this is how we characterize each verse.
- Now get the group to stand and sing the whole song. Explain that they should be still during the verses (so

- that they can concentrate on the words) and then move, monster-style, during the choruses. Begin precisely on the word 'ground' in bar 11 and end on 'aah!' in bar 18.
- · Divide the children into groups to work on choreographing their monster-stomping ideas. Share these, and let the children decide how they want the chorus to be danced.

#### Ideas

- Experiment with different dynamics. Each verse should be softer than the chorus, and the more serious lyrics of verse 4 could be really soft, containing the exuberance for a moment. This will emphasize the significance of the words and draw in the audience.
- Pick out a few children to listen to the rest of the group and charge them with the responsibility of peer-assessing the performance of, say, verse 2. Could they hear all the words? Were the interesting words 'interesting'? How many 'goldfish' are there (i.e. singers moving their lips vaguely, but not committing to actual words)?
- To settle the group at the end of a lively session, sing the first verse semi-whispered, starting at half speed and getting slower and softer. Replace 'snarl' with 'snore' and insist on peace.

#### Listen out

- There are a number of rhythmic differences between verses, to accommodate extra syllables, so listen out for any obvious discrepancies and encourage a uniform approach. Even monsters need good choral discipline!
- Songs that are fun to move to are not necessarily fun to listen to. Every word is important, so demand full concentration and clamp down on any shouting immediately.
- Make sure that the pick-up to the chorus is audible and that the snarl hasn't grown in duration.

- If you have workshopped 'Monster stomp' don't resort to a 'concert performance', because children will be disappointed if they can't show their work in its fullness. You may have to be imaginative with your performance space, even using the aisles for just some of the group to stomp in.
- Try adding whistles, rattles, and other noisy instruments to the accompaniment or backing track!

# **24** Monster stomp

#### Words and Music: Jon Bennett and John Perry



# 29 Child of tomorrow

RESOURCES

- CD1 track 29 (performance); CD2 track 29 (backing)
- ➤ Warm ups: Nos. 10–12, 20

#### Information

Sadly, the lyrics for 'Child of tomorrow' are as relevant now as when they were written 15 years ago. Since then, the world has witnessed countless wars, conflicts, and injustices to humanity. Today's children are still suffering and a peaceful tomorrow seems no nearer. Poignant lyrics and a beautiful tune combine here to create a really moving song that will stimulate and engage children. The three-part harmony of the chorus will challenge most choirs, but don't let this deter you, because any difficulties can be overcome: the questions the song poses are too important to ignore.

# Starting

• Display the following four rhythmic cells, which are drawn from the song:



For each cell, gently slap thighs with both hands on the first beat, and then clap the rhythm that follows. Teach each rhythm in question and answer style. Explain that the rhythms of cells 2 and 3 and cells 3 and 4 help to create the lilting feel that pervades the song.

• Sing verse 1 to the group, and ask them to listen out for rhythms 3 and 4 in the melody.

# Teaching and rehearsing

• Now teach verse 1 to the group, in four four-bar phrases. Avoid singing in short two-bar phrases, as this will sound too breathy and will be less musical. The rhythms fit the words quite naturally, but make sure that 'wasteland' and 'growing' sound relaxed and not too snappy. Bar 16 is tricky: the best approach is to float over the word 'future', aiming for 'dream' in the next bar.

- Move on to the chorus and teach the tune, again in four-bar phrases. Bars 23–6 may need repeating a few times. If possible, play the supporting harmonies on the piano, as this is a quick and effective way of attuning children's ears to the Bbs in the melody; alternatively, use CD1 to help with these bars. Children will find the rest of the chorus very singable, but take care with the octave jump between 'you' and 'cherish'.
- Now try the other two verses; the rhythmic underlay of the words doesn't change and singers will benefit from singing through without interruption—although bar 16 may need to be revisited later on. The 'rise and fall' of each phrase will help to bring dynamic shape to the singing. Follow each verse by singing the chorus more softly, to create a sense of poignancy.
- Your singers are now in a position to perform a unison version of the whole song, so try it with the piano or CD backing. Encourage children to enjoy the beauty of the harmony in the chorus, which they will hear as they sing, and point out that singing the three-part harmony will be their next challenge.
- Ideally, the chorus bars 19–26 should be sung unaccompanied. Decide on the best approach, depending on your singers' capabilities:
  - Sing the tune only;
  - Teach the second or third part, but not both;
  - Distribute your strongest singers equally, and teach the lower parts separately before putting the three parts together.
- If you are singing in three-part harmony, note that in bars 21–2, 27, and 32–3 the third part follows the second part.
- It may help children to hear the main tune gently in the background while you sing the chosen lower part (loudly!). In practice, a light accompaniment may be needed, one chord per bar: D, F, C, G, Eb, Bb, Am, and D. Listen to how it is done on the backing CD. Even in performance, it may be necessary to 'shadow' the harmony.

#### Ideas

- Consider encouraging the children to sing a line or two, or even a whole verse, as a small group or solo.
- Experiment with the dynamics, e.g. singing more loudly from the beginning of the chorus. Do the children prefer this?

#### Listen out

- Singing with passion can be done softly! Remind the children that clear diction will help them to communicate the song's message.
- · Listen out for calm and controlled singing throughout the verses, as reflected by the stillness of the static bass-line. Smooth out anything that upsets the mood.

- Are the words in bar 16 clear for each verse? Practise this bar separately—it mustn't sound fussy or muddled.
- The chorus must be delicate and expressive. If it isn't working, review the decision you made earlier regarding the harmony singing.
- Make sure children sing A, not Bb, in the tune on the second beat of bar 25—this is a common error.

- Get the audience on your side by explaining how this song presents a serious challenge to your choir. Can they remember singing in harmony at such a tender age?
- This would make for an excellent assembly song, which could be sung by large numbers of children.

# 29 Child of tomorrow

