

Hymns, Spirituals, Folk Songs

Music

Hymns, Spirituals & Folk Songs

Grade(s) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12



About the Course

"Music is no isolated thing. Its forms, colors, and expressive qualities do not spring from nowhere; they come out of life itself. Often, of course, they are to be enjoyed for themselves alone, in the concert hall or in one's armchair. But music also reflects human experiences, hopes, and struggles. It may give an insight into the individual and society, into the lives of those far removed from our own in time and place—an insight no other art can provide in this exact way." ~Elie Sigmeyer

The amount of teacher attention required for these lessons varies according to the student's reading abilities, self-motivation, and degree of responsibility. Music courses are fun for families or classes to do together. You may substitute a different version of any of the pieces, but be aware that lyrics and tunes sometimes differ.

Students are encouraged to listen in the afternoons to all the pieces they are learning. This may be in the car, while playing or drawing, or as a fun class or family activity. We have included some dates to be used as a quick reference when students are working on their history charts and book of centuries. It is not necessary to include them all; allow students to choose according to interest. Also, encourage students to teach the songs or share other pieces they're learning with others.

HYMNS, SPIRITUALS, & FOLK SONGS

The Christian hymn tradition is incredibly rich, and it is vanishing from many churches. In addition to bringing a much-needed moment of peace to your day, hymns can also introduce students to important theological ideas and church liturgy.

The purpose of learning folk songs is two-fold: to increase students' enjoyment of music and to situate folk music in its historical context in an effort to give students a richer understanding of the times and places which birthed the songs. A musical score is sometimes included for songs but does not always exactly match the audio used since folk songs are primarily oral songs and often take many different forms. Studying folk music helps students grow deep roots in our shared heritage and gives insight into historical events from the perspective of the people who were there.



Scheduling

Hymns, Spirituals & Folk Songs

GRADE	MIN.	xWK	MORN.	TEACH.	TOPIC(S) - BOOK(S)
1-6	10	2	*	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Hymns, Spirituals, & Folk – <i>Like a Bird, Our Hymns, Our Heritage, Music Selection Booklet or PDF</i>
7-12	10	2	*	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Sample Weekly View

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Sol-fa – Level 1	Hymn/Spiritual		Folk Song	Composer Study

Hymns, Spirituals, & Folk Songs

QR code &
links not
included in
sample

Term 1

WEEK 1

Lesson 01

- 01 Praise to the Lord
Our Hymns, Our Heritage

PREP: Bookmark #81 in Our Hymns, Our Heritage.

→ LISTEN & PRACTICE

- ∞ Audio Link: Praise to the Lord Intro
- ∞ Audio Link: Praise to the Lord Full Song

→ READ, NARRATE, & DISCUSS

"Text and Tune" p.187

• BOOK OF CENTURIES
Joachim Neander (1680,
Germany)
translated by Catherine
Winkworth (1863)

WEEK 1

Lesson 02

- 02 Lift Every Voice and Sing

PREP: Lyrics are included in your Our Work booklet (G1-8) and Music PDF (G9-12). Print Sheet music if desired.

- ∞ PDF Link: Lift Every Voice & Sing Sheet Music

→ INTRO

We're starting a new song today called "Lift Every Voice and Sing." Included in many hymnals, this song was written in 1900 for Abraham Lincoln's birthday by a pair of brothers. James Weldon Johnson wrote the lyrics and his brother J. Rosamond composed the tune. It was first performed by 500 African-American school children and continues to be performed regularly today, over a century later, by children's choirs, singers like Beyoncé, and everyone in between. You may have heard it on TV this year as it was performed at the 2023 Super Bowl. Sometimes called the Black National Anthem, this sober yet hopeful song has inspired generations and shows, especially as we start our study of the 20th century, the hope and confidence that marked the early 1900s.

→ LISTEN

After reading/sharing about the song if desired (see Teacher/Student Tip), listen to it several times, then read the lyrics aloud.

- ∞ Video Link: Lift Every Voice Original Version
- ∞ Video Link: Lift Every Voice w/ Lyrics

★ TEACHER TIP (also for Older Students)

Terminology

We're learning two different anthems this term. An anthem is a stirring song often composed for or associated with a particular cause or celebration (such as a national anthem).

Song History

Read and share more details about "Lift Every Voice and Sing" as desired (read the "Historical Note", and see Extra Helpings for a great picture book about this song.

- ∞ Article Link: Lift Every Voice & Sing History

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QR code &
links not
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sample

Term 2

WEEK 1 Lesson 25

□ 25 Were You There?

→ INTRO

The first song we're learning this term is a famous African-American spiritual often sung at Easter. It was first published in print around 1899 but began orally years earlier. As with many songs with an oral history, there are a variety of different verses and versions of the song. We're learning four of the most common.

→ LISTEN

Bookmark the song in your Our Work Booklet (G1-8) or Music PDF (G9-12) and print off the sheet music if desired (note: the lyrics in the sheet music do not exactly match the video). Read through the words, discuss your thoughts, and then listen to the full song.

∞ PDF Link: Were You There? Sheet Music

∞ Video Link: Were You There? Full Song

• HISTORY CHARTS

Were You There? First published in 1899

WEEK 1 Lesson 26

□ 26 I Have a Little Dreidel

→ INTRO

"I Have a Little Dreidel" is a popular Jewish-American folk song from the last century. The most famous version was composed by Shmuel (or Samuel) E. Goldfarb in 1927, but others contributed to various iterations of the song before and after. First sung in Seattle schools where Goldfarb taught, it soon spread around the country. A "dreidel" is a wooden or clay spinning top that is used to play the game of Dreidel, often as part of Hanukkah festivities.

→ LISTEN & DISCUSS

Follow along with the video lyrics or your PDF. First, listen to the song, then play it again and hum along.

∞ Video Link: I Have a Little Dreidel Full Song

★ TEACHER/OLDER STUDENT RESOURCE

Learn more about the history of I Have a Little Dreidel if interested. Note: the words listed are a bit different than the version we're singing. There are many variations of the song.

∞ Article Link: History of I Have a Little Dreidel

WEEK 2 Lesson 27

□ 27 Were You There? (cont.)

→ RECAP

What is "Were You There?" about?

→ SING

∞ Audio Link: Humming Were You There?

→ READ, NARRATE, and DISCUSS

Luke 22-24 in your Bible (finish on your own time if interested).

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Appendix

Musical Vocabulary

Use this appendix as a reference when looking at a musical score, reading and/or recapping a lesson, and whenever strikes your fancy. Terms included here are used in this year's lessons. Refer to the Classics for Kids music dictionary for additional terms not included here.

[Extra resource: Classics for Kids musical dictionary](#)

TERM	DEFINITION
Anthem	A stirring song often composed for or associated with a particular cause or celebration (such as a national anthem).
Bush Ballad	Type of ballad (usually turned song) with the story set in the Australian Bush. A ballad is action/adventure story poem written with an ABAC rhyme scheme, often with 3–4 stresses in each line.
Violoncello	Commonly just called "cello" for short. It is larger and sounds deeper and lower than its cousins the violin and viola.
Pizzicato	Translation "pinched" – when a musician plucks the strings of a stringed instrument such as a violin or cello with their fingers (instead of using a bow).
Score	The printed manuscript with the musical notation for each instrument of the orchestra.
Movement	A shorter section of a large work such as a symphony, sonata, or concerto.
Aria	A stand-alone musical piece for a solo voice, usually accompanied and often part of a larger work such as an opera or oratorio.
Recitative	Opera is made up of two different kinds of music: aria and recitative. Arias sound more like songs, with melodies that recur, whereas recitative sounds like ordinary speech set to music. The natural rhythm of sentences is used, so that it really sounds like regular talking, but using different pitches (musical notes). Recitatives usually occur just before arias.
<i>glissando</i>	A glissando happens when an instrument slides or moves quickly from one note to another in one sweep of sound.
Cadenza	Generally occurring at the end of the 1st movement of a concerto, an improvised or written-out ornamental passage played or sung by a soloist, usually in a "free" rhythmic style, and often allowing virtuosic display.
Arpeggio	An arpeggio is a broken chord where notes of a particular chord are played one at a time after each other in order instead of all together at once.
Transpose	To "transpose" a piece of music means to change the key of the music while keeping the same tune. For instance, you could start on one note and sing "row, row, row your boat" and then start on a different note and sing the same tune. When you do, you are transposing the song from one key to another.
Improvise	To play or sing a solo during a piece of music that you composed yourself (often on the spot in real time).
Opera	A story set to music, typically fairly long.

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Examination

Term 1

- GRADES 1–12**
- Recite Silent Night (in your language of Choice).
 - Sing Lift Every Voice & Sing OR Waltzing Matilda.