


# Christmas Rose Blooming

Composer: **Ruth Elaine Schram** | Text: **15th Century Anonymous**  
 Rehearsal Resource Page by **Victor C. Johnson**, *Sing!* Choral Editor

## VOCABULARY

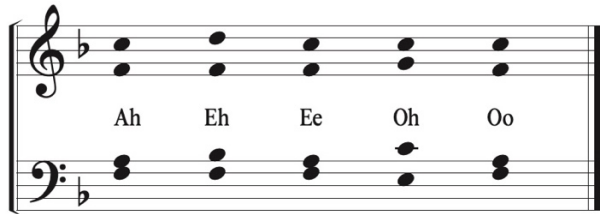
<i>mp</i> .....	<i>mezzo piano</i> .....	medium soft
<i>rall.</i> .....	<i>rallentando</i> .....	to gradually pull back the tempo
<i>a tempo</i> .....		return to original tempo
 .....	<i>decrescendo</i> .....	to gradually get softer
<i>cresc.</i> .....	<i>crescendo</i> .....	to gradually get louder
<i>mf</i> .....	<i>mezzo forte</i> .....	medium loud
<i>f</i> .....	<i>forte</i> .....	loud
<i>dim.</i> .....	<i>diminuendo</i> .....	to gradually get softer
<i>rit.</i> .....	<i>ritardando</i> .....	to gradually slow down

## PREPARATION

Sing this fragment of the first phrase of *Lo, How a Rose* on “Ooo,” adding a gentle crescendo to the peak of the phrase and a diminuendo to the cadence. Raise the eyebrows on the top note to open the resonant space.



Sing this chordal warm-up on **Ah – Eh – Ee – Oh – Oo**. Focus on a uniform, warm resonance across all vowels. No vowel should stand out from the others. This primes the blend needed for the tender, intimate character of this piece throughout.



## FOCUSED TEACHING STRATEGIES

### Section B (mm. 24 - 34)

Before any singing, write “Res miranda” on the board with its translation (“a wonderful thing”) and speak it together in rhythm. Then discuss: how does knowing what you are saying change how you will sing it? The secondary dominant (D to G) should feel like a moment of wonder and forward leaning- the harmony and the text are telling the same story.

### Section C (mm. 39-58) | Rhythmic Alterations to a Familiar Melody

First, have singers speak the original rhythm of *Lo, How a Rose* as they know it. Then speak the rhythm as it appears in this setting. Discuss what changed and why the alteration might serve the expressive character of this particular piece. Singers who understand the composer’s rhythmic choices will perform them with intention rather than mere accuracy.

## STUDENT ENRICHMENT QUESTIONS

1. The text “There is no rose of such virtue” dates to the early 15th century and mixes English and Latin in the same poem. Why do you think medieval composers and poets used two languages within a single work? What does each language contribute that the other cannot?
2. The *Lo, How a Rose* melody appears first in the piano introduction, then in the C section sung by the choir, and finally woven into the accompaniment of the closing measures. How does your experience of this melody change each time you hear it in a different context within the same piece? What does the composer gain by returning to it throughout the work?