

Sing Together Children!



by Madeline Bridges

*Developing Young Singers through Vocal Exploration,
Warm-ups, Rounds, Songs, and Singing Games*

Resource contains:

- Over 75 singing activities designed for children of *all* ages (preschool to older elementary) *including*:
 - vocal exploration activities
 - songs for developing singers
 - songs with movement and action
 - folk songs and dances
 - singing games
 - warm-ups and vocalises
 - choral technique songs
 - rounds and songs that teach part-singing
- Teaching Suggestions
- Demonstration DVD

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Introduction

Singing seems easy enough, right? Open your mouth, take a breath, and sing. Anyone can do it! Oh, that it were so simple. Singing is actually a complex activity that involves listening, thinking, and doing, as well as the ability to self-monitor these processes and coordinate these skills into an artistic experience. Wow!

Contemporary culture assumes that the ability to sing is a gift that a person has either received...or missed. Indeed, some children seem to sing naturally. They are almost born singing. Many children, however, need to learn to sing just as they need to learn to walk, read, and think mathematically. *Sing Together, Children!* encourages choir directors and teachers to involve children in the singing experience *purposefully* with the assumption that all children (barring physical limitations) can improve their ability to sing tunefully.

The approach of this publication is to involve children in the singing process through active participation. Children should experience these activities in a group setting. They are non-threatening and playful.

This resource begins where the singing process begins: with vocal exploration activities. It continues on presenting simple songs, action songs, and singing games that enable beginning singers to “find” and gain confidence in the singing voice. The singing games also provide enjoyable ways for children to socialize using music.

The final two chapters of the book assume children are singing together in a choral setting (which may be in a choir or classroom) and present songs and activities that encourage more refined and beautiful singing, singing that’s both artistic and enjoyable. Chapter 4 provides vocal warm-ups and vocalises that focus on numerous other elements of choral singing including posture, breathing, diction, pure vowels and articulation. Chapter 5 presents a model that enables choirs to move purposefully from singing unison songs to songs that provide opportunities for singing in harmony.

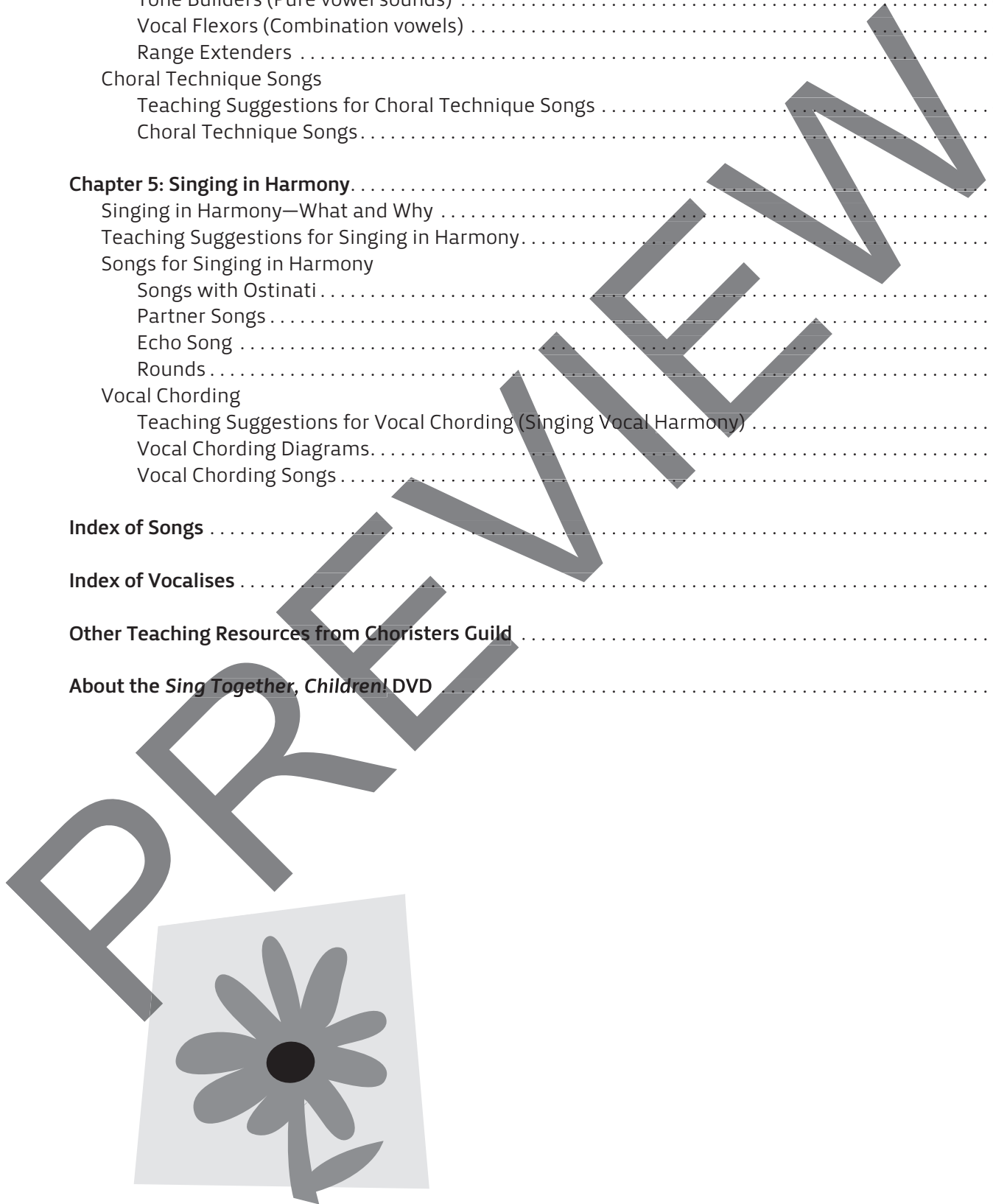
It is my hope that *Sing Together, Children!* will be useful to anyone who has experienced the pleasure of singing and wishes to share this joy with children in a purposeful, joyful manner.

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Exploring the Voice

Before children can sing comfortably and easily, they need numerous opportunities to explore the voice and feel (emotionally, mentally, and physically) what their voice can do. The experiences described in this section take only a short amount of time during a class or rehearsal, and, though the activities appear to be random, they provide children a foundation for joyful participation in singing together.

Vocal Exploration Activities—What and Why

Vocal exploration activities allow children to explore the voice. One common vocal exploration technique is the siren imitation. When imitating the sound of a siren...

- children participate in a delightful, game-like activity
- children experience vocal sounds in the upper part of their register, i.e. they produce pitches

higher than 

- children are not required to match a specific pitch. Instead, they produce a series of sliding pitched sounds in the upper register of their voices

Why is this a valuable experience? Because a primary component of tuneful singing is coordination. Vocal exploration activities provide children opportunities to *feel* the sensations that are a central part of singing.

A central premise of *Sing Together, Children!* is that all children deserve the chance to develop their “head voice.” Head voice singing is not the “belted” vocal quality familiar in recorded pop music. Rather, head voice singing is a lighter, more natural and healthy way to sing.* Young singers can more easily find their head voice if they are singing in the upper register (not in the lower register) of their voice. Children who learn to successfully sing in their head voice will have the foundation for successful singing in multiple styles for the rest of their lives.


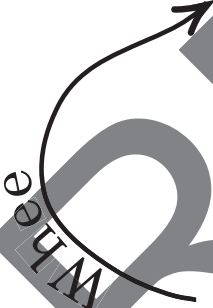
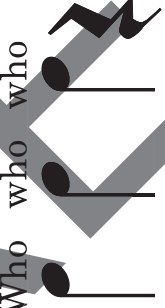

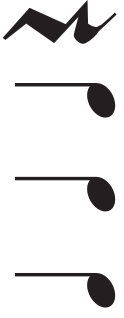
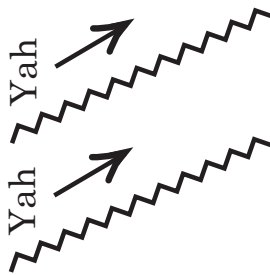
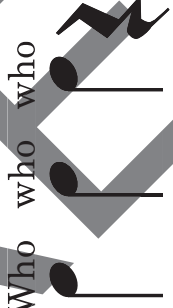



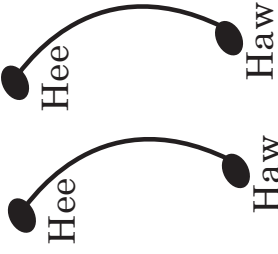

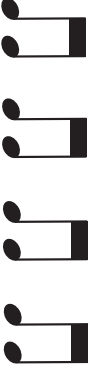




Teachers often mistakenly label children as “non-singers” when, in fact, the children simply have a coordination problem. These children are not able to successfully sing pitches above the “break” in

their voice that occurs about halfway between  and . Because these children

cannot “switch” out of their heavier chest voice into the head voice, they simply push and sing whatever pitches may emerge. The tones are speech-like and non-tuneful. These children, however, are not monotone, tone-deaf, or uncertain singers. They are simply *developing* singers. They need and deserve more guided experience.

Vocal exploration activities enable children to experience the upper register of their vocal range in delightful game-like ways. These activities increase the flexibility of children’s vocal cords and enhance the likelihood that children will become more successful in their attempts to sing tunefully in the future.

Vibes/Vocal

 <p>(Click tongue)</p>	 <p>Who who who</p> 	 <p>Sh_____</p>	 <p>(Pop lips)</p>
<p>Yah Yah</p> 		 <p>rrr rrr (roll "r's")</p>	 <p>Mm_____</p>
	 <p>Hee Hee Haw Haw</p>		<p>Wah wah wah wah wah wah wah</p> 
	 <p>No! No!</p>	 <p>(tongue wag)</p>	 <p>Ain't this fun!</p>

Oh, My! No More Pie!

(View on DVD: Chapter 2, Track 4)

Leader: *Group: Leader:

Oh, my! Oh, my! No more pie!

Group: Leader: Group: Leader:

No more pie! Pie's too sweet. Pie's too sweet. I

Group:

1. want a piece of meat. I want a piece of meat.
 2. want a piece of bread. I want a piece of bread.
 3. think I'll go to town. I think I'll go to town.
 4. think I'll take a car. I think I'll take a car.
 5. fell and stubbed my toe! I fell and stubbed my toe!
 6. think I'll take a train. I think I'll take a train.
 7. fell and hurt my neck! I fell and hurt my neck!

1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Leader: Group: Leader:

Meat's too red. Meat's too red. I
 Bread's too brown. Bread's too brown. I
 Town's too far. Town's too far. I
 Car won't go. Car won't go. I
 Toe gives me pain! Toe gives me pain! I
 Train had a wreck. Train had a wreck. I

7

Leader: Group: Leader: Group:

Oh, my! Oh, my! No more pie! No more pie!

*or Solo.
 Traditional.

Singing and Moving

For hundreds of years, children have enthusiastically participated in songs that combine singing and movement. These songs range from simple action songs to more complex singing folk games and dances.

This chapter presents several categories of singing and movement activities. These activities allow children the opportunity to sing purposefully and joyfully together as they increase their confidence and competence in the singing process.

Many of the singing games have the added bonus of providing teachers and children the chance to “play” together as they participate in wholesome and delightful cooperative group activities.

Singing and Moving—What and Why

Repeated performances of simple action songs and singing games give developing singers numerous opportunities to “practice” the art of tuneful singing. Because movement is the focus, young singers will excitedly participate in the activity when they might otherwise feel reticent to sing or repeatedly rehearse a song.

Teach and experience these action songs and singing games without the piano. This allows children the best opportunity to hear themselves sing. Songs in this section are divided into the following categories:

- Action Songs
- Winding Games
- Circle Games
- Folk Dancing Games
- Passing Games
- Partner Clapping Games

The songs differ significantly in complexity making some songs more appropriate for younger children and others more suitable for older children. The songs can be taught in a similar manner using one of the two processes on page 27.