

Sue Nicholls offers some gentle encouragement for KS1 practitioners suffering from a spot of stage fright...

Singing for the Scared

Some adults would rather go bungee jumping than sing in front of 30 wide-eyed children. But rest assured, oh ye of faint heart, there is currently a massive amount of support for 'scared' singers, and it's all free! Sing Up, the national singing programme, has provided a wonderful website full of accessible material to encourage the most reluctant singer. Teachers' notes, backing tracks and over 300 singable songs will tempt you and your children to join the ever-growing band of primary school singers. Go to www.singup.org and register today.

Dipping a cautious toe into the musical shallows, you might also like to try this topical lesson activity ahead of the summer break. It's based on *Off on Holiday*, a cumulative KS1 song from The Song Stack, published by Music Education Supplies. By following the simple step-by-step guidance you can give your class a rewarding vocal experience and use the cross-curricular links to connect singing to every day school activities.

OFF ON HOLIDAY

Off on holiday

Do your packing today

But don't forget your bucket and spade

Before you go away!

Off on holiday

Do your packing today

But don't forget your bucket and spade

Your flippers and mask

Before you go away!

Off on holiday

Do your packing today

But don't forget your bucket and spade

Your flippers and mask

Your cozzie and towel

Before you go away!....

Off on holiday

Do your packing today

But don't forget your bucket and spade

Your flippers and mask

Your cozzie and towel

Your sun cream and hat

Before you go away!....

Off on holiday

Do your packing today

But don't forget your bucket and spade

Your flippers and mask

Your cozzie and towel

Your sun cream and hat

Your bat and your ball

Before you go away!....



Download
the song from
www.mesdirect.com



KS1 Warm-up

SINGING IS A PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BUT IT ALSO REQUIRES REAL FOCUS: WARM-UPS HELP TO PREPARE THE BODY, ENCOURAGE CONCENTRATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE JUST LOVE THEM – THE WACKIER, THE BETTER!

- Roll shoulders forward, making circles - the size of eggs...tennis balls...footballs...and, finally, beach balls! Repeat with backward circles, but don't be tempted to rush.
- Shake arms and wiggle fingers
- Do some slow knee bends
- Now reach up high, one arm after the other and imagine picking stars out of the sky.
- Warm up the voice: use the sound 'ng' and slide your voice up and down as if your voices were on a roller-coaster track.

Hooray for Holidays

TALK ABOUT GETTING READY FOR A HOLIDAY AND SHARE THE CHILDREN'S IDEAS OF WHAT TO PACK. ASK THE CHILDREN TO BRING IN THE PAIRS OF ITEMS LISTED IN THE SONG FROM HOME:

- Bucket and spade
- Flippers and mask
- Cozzie and towel
- Sun cream and hat
- Bat and a ball



Listen to the song (it's free to download from www.mesdirect.com) and see if the children can describe the pattern of the ever-growing list. Notice the jaunty piano accompaniment that sets a light-hearted mood and also gives short interludes between verses.

Choose ten children to stand in a line, holding the holiday items in the given order. Listen to the song again, asking each 'holder' to lift up their holiday object whenever it's mentioned, and encourage the others to join in with singing the name of each one...bucket and spade etc. These tiny vocal snippets are always sung to the same notes and this repetition helps to make the singers (and their teacher) feel vocally secure.

Now try the whole song. Encourage your singers to keep their faces animated and to open their mouths, particularly as the tune goes higher for each successive phrase. Support the correct order of items by walking behind the line, pointing to each 'exhibit'. Once the song is familiar, invite your children

to customise their own version, by choosing different items to pack for imaginary locations and scenarios: a safari, a jungle trek, a winter sports holiday, a space mission or a fantasy trip: 'Off to Hogwarts today...'

Plan a performance for an assembly and devise ways of making the singing special so that you connect with your audience. Group the singers in an interesting shape, using different levels so that everyone – and the holiday props – can be seen. Add some movement, e.g. wagging fingers on 'don't forget...' or invite a solo performer to walk up and down swinging a suitcase. Think up simple actions during the piano interludes, such as swimming arms or fanning movement to show the tropical temperature. Have everyone dressed in summery clothes and finally, invite your audience to join in and share the magic of singing together.

Why not revisit the song at the end of next term?

*'Santa's on his way, riding on his sleigh,
Please don't forget some choccies for gran
Some slippers for mum
Some Lego for me
To bring on Christmas Day!*



Once you've experienced the excitement of singing with your children, there'll be no turning back. It's a sociable activity and can really improve challenging behaviour. Singing provides young learners with a sense of achievement and confidence they may not experience in other curricular areas. Best of all, children love to sing and they're not judgmental about adults' voices!

So come on. Take a deep breath, smile and sing! You won't regret it.

The Song Stack with words and melodies by Sue Nicholls and piano arrangements by David Green, is published by www.mesdirect.com



CHANGE THEIR TUNE 5 WAY TO IMPROVE CHILDREN'S SINGING...

- 1 Never allow the children to shout, however exciting the material
- 2 Encourage good posture; stand tall but not stiffly
- 3 Keep the face animated
- 4 Rehearse for a performance and feel the 'buzz' of an audience's enthusiastic response
- 5 Sing every day!

Cross curricular links

BUILD A TOPIC AROUND SUE'S HOLIDAY SONG...

SCIENCE: sort the materials from which each beach wear item is made

NUMERACY: estimate then order the weight of each item; use ordinal numbers: first, second, third...to describe the list

CREATIVE WRITING: write an imaginary postcard from a holiday location and include three packed items in the text

SPEAKING AND LISTENING: talk about past or planned holidays or conduct taped interviews with adults in school about their special holiday experiences

ART AND DESIGN: paint a holiday postcard scene
DESIGN TECHNOLOGY: Design and make Punch and Judy puppets or a model of the puppet booth; design swimwear or create a new ice cream 'sprinkle'

HISTORY: What was the seaside like in Granny's day?

GEOGRAPHY: Use pins and threads on a world map to match children's names to holiday destinations

PE: Invent a new beach game

