

Teaching Notes

God Defend New Zealand

Sing our national anthem with pride and at a fairly brisk pace! In our Festival we sing a straight choral version with no riffs or melismas (“twiddley bits”!). “God” is pronounced as it is written with a short “o”, rather than the “Gard” often heard at sports fixtures. Ensure that the first line of the Maori verse is pronounced phonetically as follows: “Air - ee - hor - ah - ah - too - ah”. Keep the mouth shape north-and-south especially on the “a” vowels e.g. “God”, “na - tions” [nay-shones]. Ensure that the final consonants are produced, especially on words ending in “d” e.g. New Zealand. Please note that the following lines are now to be sung as two phrases: “Kia hua kote pai, Kia tau tou atawhai” (v.1), and “Guard Pacific's triple star from the shafts of strife and war” (v.2). Note also that in the version we now use featuring the Concert Band, the anthem starts with a drum roll.

Top of the World

This upbeat Carpenters song is a great starter to our show with a positive message that encompasses our theme of making the world a better place to live in! We want the students to sing this with energy and enthusiasm and a smile! Watch some of the syncopated rhythms throughout, for example in bar 20 “not a cloud in the sky” – the sky comes before the beat and same again with “got the sun in my eyes”. Some of the words in this song do not need to be too exaggerated in their endings and can be more relaxed – such as “lookin’”. Ensure that students sing all the dynamic markings, especially at bar 53, we want that phrase to be sung through with a strong lead into the next phrase. This song finishes with a great energetic, strong phrase so rehearse the fortissimo endings with confidence but without the students “shouting” it! This song will be accompanied by the concert band.

Vision of Peace

This beautiful, flowing, legato song should be sung with lovely connected phrasing. There will likely be a small challenge with the cut off of the word ‘peace’ when it happens, so endeavour to encourage your students to make the smallest ‘c’ sound that they can! The tune may be recognisable for some of you as it is the tune from the “New World Symphony” by Dvorak so this being a classical piece it needs to be sung with beautiful line and dynamic contrast.

Make your own kind of music

Made famous by Mama Cass Elliot, this song has been used in various movies and TV shows; most recently in the popular series ‘Lost’. There are a couple of tricky rhythmic bits to watch out for when they change slightly between the verses to fit the lyrics e.g. ‘*Nobody can tell you*’ compared to ‘*You’re gonna be knowin’*’ (which also has a surprise long note), but if you follow Charlotte on the recording the children should pick this up easily as it’s that kind of catchy song. There are a lot of short phrases in the verses so the couple of longer phrases e.g. ‘*cause it hangs them up to see someone like you*’ and ‘*just to do your thing’s the hardest thing to do*’ should be sung through in one breath. Enjoy this song, it’s fun!

Child of Tomorrow

A simple, sweet and elegant piece of music that needs to be sung lyrically and with expression. Adhere to the phrasing that is written such as in bar 9-12 and sing these phrases in one breath. The majority of this song is sung in unison therefore it is important to keep each vowel focused with the cut offs of each phrase on the allocated rest. At letter E & F this phrase can be sung with more strength. Pay attention to the diction of the words and ensure students are using their head voice and singing in an expressive and lyrical style. At letter G, students in the massed choir will need to be careful to hold their notes and cut off after 2 beats while the Junior Representative Choir moves.

We Know The Way

A fun popular number that the children will love singing! This piece begins with the Representative Choirs and the Massed Choirs joining at B. It is important to listen carefully to the pronunciation guide for this track as there is a lot of language to fit into some of the phrases. It is a catchy number and once students are familiar with the language they will find it much easier to sing. Letter C 'sun is high' and 'ocean breeze' ensure students are singing the notes notated - D, G, G. This song is marked forte at the beginning with no other dynamic markings, we want to start the song strong and allow the way the music has been written and the words to shape the piece. At the end students will need to watch for note transition and cut off.

Pōkarekare Ana

Being such a well-known traditional song, we wanted an arrangement of this beautiful waiata that would be different to how it's been heard before, so we asked our former Musical Director Patrick Shepherd to put his spin on it. While the piano accompaniment and style is very different sounding for this song, we want the singing to be how you might normally hear Pōkarekare Ana sung – beautifully, sweetly, soaring – and the contrast between the style of the accompaniment and the style of the singing will make our performance of this classic a success!

When singing in another language, it is important we take the time to ensure our pronunciation is accurate so listen carefully to the pronunciation guide track that the wonderful Megan Herd from St Margaret's College has recorded for us. Speak the text slowly and methodically along with the pronunciation guide, then sing that over the accompaniment or along with the teaching track. Make sure to correct any issues with pronunciation early on in the learning of this song so that anything incorrect doesn't become ingrained in our singing of this song.

The finger snaps at the beginning come on beats 2 and 4 of the first six bars and then only on beat 2 of the seventh bar. This makes 13 clicks in total before you stop, and start singing. Or, you could listen out for the riff in the piano just before you start singing and make sure to stop clicking *before* that riff comes in (the riff starts on beat 3 of bar 7, clicks stop on beat 2 of bar 7)

Don't Dream It's Over

After *Pōkarekare Ana*, next in the programme is another New Zealand "classic" – *Don't Dream It's Over* by Neil Finn, as performed by Crowded House. Our arrangement for the 2021 Festival will be accompanied not just by piano but also a chamber (small) string orchestra (violins, violas, cello, double bass) which will add a whole new dimension to our performance!

When we sing as the Massed Choirs, we need to make sure everyone is singing the same thing so make sure to listen and look carefully at any rhythms or notes that might be different from the version of this song you might know. There are some interesting phrases in this song ("My possessions are causing me suspicion but there's no proof") and the best way to learn these tricky sections is to speak them slowly in rhythm and then work your way up to saying them in rhythm at normal speed, then you can work on putting it all together and singing it with the notes and the accompaniment.

It is suggested you omit between Letter E and F during rehearsals to save some time. That is, when you get to Letter E, jump straight to Letter F and skip-out E-F. If you are using the teaching tracks, those will also skip E-F.

The third-to-last "Hey now," (six bars before the end) make sure you don't carry on singing after that one – stop and wait for the two bars of instrumental and then come in again for the last two "Hey now,". To help

signal to you that this is different, listen out to the piano at this spot - it plays a high note which is different to normal, and this should be your signal that something different happens here (stop singing and wait for two bars).

A Whole New World

This piece from the 1992 Disney film “Aladdin” is bound to be a hit with the students and fits well with our theme of Tomorrow’s World being a better place to live in – we hope! It opens the second act with the orchestra so needs to be sung with plenty of line through the phrases and the dynamics grow throughout the song. The mood needs to be uplifting and positive with good articulation and energy in the consonants. Cut off the endings of “world” at the start of the next bar cleanly to adhere to the quaver rest before the next phrase begins. Each phrase needs to be legato and sung in head voice with beautiful tone. On the last phrase students will need to watch the pauses so they are in unison and no breath before “me”.

Brindisi Song

“Let joy, oh let joy be the life that we live!” – the opening words of this song give us the instruction for how to perform this piece in our programme! This is an operatic song, so we need to put a lot of liveliness and drama into our performance – the way we sing the notes, the way we pronounce the text, the way we look when we are singing – so that the audience knows this is a song of joy, friendship, family, love, dreaming, freedom, and bliss!

There are some tricky phrases in this song with a lot of words and a lot of notes to sing in a short space of time (“with our friends, families, and love ones so dear.”) As with *Don’t Dream It’s Over*, say these tricky phrases in rhythm at a slower tempo and then work your way up to saying them at normal speed. Try singing with the notes and the words at a slower tempo as well, and then work your way up to putting it all together at the normal speed. Make sure the text is “bouncy” and staccato (short) so that you can sing through all the words in the quick phrases.

The first verse (Letter A) is exactly the same as the second (Letter D), except for the very ending, so once you have mastered the first half, you’ve already mastered 95% of the second!

At the very end, sing whichever note feels most comfortable for you to sing (high G or middle G).

One Day More

We are excited to bring you our finale piece, One Day More from Les Miserables. The Senior representative choir will start us off at the beginning with the Junior representative choir coming in at bar 9. During the beginning of the teaching track, you will hear Rachel and Charlotte singing the Junior and Senior Rep. choir parts but it will be a quieter volume, just so students get used to the introduction. Then at Letter B when the massed choir join, the volume (Charlotte singing) is normal again.

This then becomes more a “duet” with the massed and junior choir together and the Senior choir in split parts. At bar 24, watch the semiquaver start in each phrase on “the time” and “the day” with a big crescendo leading into “here”! At letter C, the massed choir will be split in half with Side 1 singing with the Junior choir and Side 2 singing with the Senior choir. We recommend students learning both “sides” depending on where they will be sitting the Town Hall so they know both parts and we will rehearse both in the area rehearsals as well. At bar 36 when each side sing after each other, make sure students come off the note cleanly before the next phrase. Eg. “high” and “king” and “won”. At bar 52, students will need to watch the slowing down in the music at “tomorrow we’ll discover etc” – then at “store” there is a big

pause before the next phrase. The massed choir stay on the same note at the end with the representative choirs taking the top notes to finish what we hope will be a very exciting finish to a programme that has now been two years in the making!!