

Te Hā Puoro | Christchurch Schools' Music Festival

2026 Massed Choir Programme - Teaching Notes

Song Books

For 2026, you will notice the Massed Choir (MC) music parts are slightly larger than in previous years' Song Books. Whenever there are additional parts for the Representative Choirs, this music is written smaller. We hope this makes it easier for students to follow along with the notes and words in the Massed Choir staves. As in previous years, we've also put the part name in bold (**Massed Choirs**, or **MC**) to help with readability.

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. 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. It is important that students sing the version we have created, not one that may be sung at their school or in their assemblies. This version has been specifically arranged for the Music Festival and is in the correct key that it should be sung in. Make sure students sing in their head voice rather than chest voice throughout the anthem.

Any Dream Will Do

This famous tune from Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dreamcoat is a perfect song to start our programme themed "Just Dream". This song will be accompanied by the Concert Band. Ensure the students sing each phrase with a relaxed, legato feel and make sure they sing each semibreve right to the end of the phrase cutting off the note at the bar line. Make sure the text is clear and crisp and the lyrics are sung more in an English accent rather than with "American" relaxed consonants. Ensure the semiquaver upbeats at Bar 36 are in time and not anticipated to keep a rhythmic feel in this section. Adhere to the changes in dynamics in each section.

From bar 61 make sure the Massed Choir only sings a minim at the end of each phrase so they do not sing over the representative Junior choir part and then note the rallentando at the end with students needing to watch the cut off on the last pause.

I Have a Voice

This is an inspiring song with a powerful and relevant message for our students where their voices matter. In connection with our theme of Dreams, this piece highlights how using our voice helps our dreams grow. When we speak up, share ideas, and believe in ourselves, our dreams become more possible. How fantastic! It is important that students

not only sing accurately but also communicate this meaning with confidence and expression.

This song is written in a pop style, so particular attention is needed to avoid sliding into or between notes. While maintaining the feel, students should still focus on tall vowels. All end consonants should be placed on the following rest, and dynamics are clearly marked in the score. The song requires careful attention, as rhythmical patterns vary depending on the lyrics. The chorus (“I have a voice, I have a song”) consistently begins on the first beat, while verse entries can differ and must be practised to ensure accuracy. Be careful of the diphthongs on the word “voice”. Watch out in the phrase “For I have voice” that between the “For” and “I”, students do not roll the two together and that there is a slight glottal stop between the two.

It is also helpful for students to recognise the structure of the piece, particularly where representative choir parts echo the main melody before coming together to strengthen the overall message. At the end of the piece, students need to watch the conductor to ensure they come in together at the slower speed.

Daydream Believer

When people think of “Daydream Believer,” they almost always think of The Monkees. Their version is the one that made the song famous, becoming one of their biggest hits and reaching #1 in the United States. It remains one of their most recognisable songs today. The song is about holding onto dreams and believing in good things, even when real life doesn’t quite match what you imagined.

As always, when performing well-known songs, it is important that we sing the exact notes, rhythms, and words as written in your Music Festival Song Books and heard on the Teaching Tracks, as our version may differ slightly from the original.

Because this song includes syncopated rhythms, practise the text and rhythms separately from the melody. Start by speaking the lyrics in rhythm before adding the notes, this will make learning much easier. Be sure to observe rests carefully, especially in the chorus. These are not always breathing moments, but intentional pauses that build anticipation: “Cheer up, sleepy Jean, (breathe) oh what can it mean, (pause) to a (breathe/pause) daydream believer...”

At letter H, when the Massed Choir sings “ooo,” focus on creating a tall, resonant vowel sound and maintain a smooth, connected line, especially as the melody leaps. At letter I, although marked forte, take care not to push or shout. This is the musical high point of the song, but it should still sound controlled. At letter J, note that the Massed Choir does not sing. This section is for the representative groups, with the Massed Choir coming in at bar 81. Everyone, including the piano will come off together at the very end of the piece.

Bigger/Tua

Stan Walker released *Bigger* (lyrics all in English) and *Tua* (lyrics all in Te Reo Māori) in 2020. The song is about not letting others hold you back, trusting yourself, and having the courage to go after bigger dreams.

In our arrangement of the song we have tried to stay as close to Stan Walker’s way of singing it, while making a few tweaks to suit our tamariki’s voices and to suit singing as a

Massed Choir. Introduce the song to students by playing Stan Walker's versions, but once you start learning the notes and rhythms, please stick to listening to the Festival Learning Track so as to not confuse students.

You will hear a percussion sound on beats 2 and 4 of the bar throughout the Learning Track - this is only to help students internalise the song's pulse, not to encourage them to (finger) click or clap along. We will have a small band join us when we perform this in the Town Hall and they will help us keep the beat.

At Letter B, sing through (don't take a break) after "them" into "it" - same again at Letter G on "-ing" or "feel-ing" into "I".

At bar 14, the notes on "small" are quick/short (small) so that we have time for a breath before singing the chorus ("When we can be bigger..."). The "small" starting in bar 43 needs to be held much longer to create the build-up into Letter K where the Junior and Senior Representative Choirs lead us.

It will be very important to watch the conductor in the pick-up to Letter M so that we all sing the outro at the same tempo (speed). Even though this section is slower, the "-a" of the very last "tu-a" we sing is short.

Moemoe Iti

Moemoe Iti (Little Dream) is a waiata written for us by Music Festival alumni Tōmuri Spicer. Tōmuri was a member of the Junior and Senior Representative Choirs in the early 2010s and has since gone on to study indigenous music and instrumentation. Tōmuri joined us again for the 2025 Festival (*Whanāu - Friends and Family*) as a member of the Alumni Choir, and to lead the Massed Choirs in Mili Mili Pati for the song *Si Manu La'iti'iti*.

Our arrangement of Tōmuri's waiata tells a small part of the wider story of *Moemoe Iti*. After the first verse that we sing (*Whatu iti...*) the story goes on:

Little girl, watchful as the owl.
Silently snuggles amidst mama's shawl
Hair all hidden under a hat of straw
And the ghosts still slumber, as her boat flows on.

And after the chorus (*Kei runga...*):

Huia [a native, extinct bird], dancing through misty beams,
Twinkling sun dapples midnight wings
Forests clambering up snowy mountain peaks,
And bright the day in her little dreams

...

Huia cries, the mountains echo her song.

During some of the gaps in singing - introduction, Letter G - we hope to include additional elements in our performance of this song in the Town Hall, so it is important students know to stay fully engaged and focused from the very start of the song, even when they are not singing.

Please listen carefully to the learning and pronunciation tracks, especially for words such as "wai" (bar 15, early dip-thong), the difference in the vowel between "kō" and "kōu" (bar

19), “Kei” (Letter E, slightly later dip-thong), “wae” (bar 45, both the “a” and “e” vowel need to fit into a short note), and “moe-moe i-ti” (bar 55-56, the “i” comes before the first beat of 56).

Think about how the meaning of the lyrics should inform the way we sing this waiata - for example, a shimmering moon, a mirror-like ocean, a little girl nodding off to sleep, dreaming.

Music Makers and Dreamers of Dreams

"We are the music makers, and we are the dreamers of dreams" is the opening line of the 1873 poem "Ode" by Arthur O'Shaughnessy. It celebrates artists, poets, and dreamers as the true, often lonely, movers and shakers who inspire generations and shape civilization. This is a powerful song which will end the first half of our programme. The song begins with both sides of the Massed Choir being split into two sides - please learn both parts when learning the song. At bar 8 the 's' of dreams can cut off on the rest with the next phrase being sung in one breath into the next section.

Note the change of tempo at Letter A and energetic, syncopated feel in this section.

At letter C although the rhythms should be sung accurately there still needs to be a clear line in the phrasing to keep it legato throughout.

From letter D until letter G, the representative choirs will sing this but get the massed students to listen to this part so they are used to hearing it when it comes to the concert. At letter H, again get students to maintain the line and not breathe in the middle of the phrase. Watch the upbeat quaver entry at bar 61 so students do not anticipate this entry. At letter L, the tempo goes back to the initial opening tempo so watch this change and again Massed Choirs are split in two with representative choirs helping each side as at the beginning of the song. This song ends with a dramatic fortissimo dynamic. Students should sing 'dreams' with a lovely long open vowel and not pinch the 'e' vowel on the last note.

Pure Imagination

This recognisable tune is from the 1971 film Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory with a surprise twist in the middle of the song that emanates the newest version of Wonka from 2023 with the music adapted by Timothée Chalamet.

This song will start the second half of our concert and will be accompanied by the orchestra.

Students will need to watch the conductor carefully with tempo and dynamic changes throughout this song. Vowels and consonants need to be quite clear and clear - again more in "English" style rather than "American". On the word "imagination" - the '-tion' needs to be open and not clipped. Each phrase needs to be sung through without a break such as "come with me and you'll be" and "take a look and you'll see" etc. The breath marks are all indicated by the rests and that is where students can take a breath. Watch the octave leap at bar 21 so the vowel is north/south and supported. Again the same leap happens at bar 27 heading into 'do it' - keep the sound supported without dropping into the bottom 'C' too much.

At letter D, the style of the piece changes into the new version and the orchestra will work their magic here! The lead into Letter H is a new tempo and students will have to watch the conductor here to be aware of the slower lead into the next phrase. At bar 71 to the end students should sing that phrase to the end without a breath. Keep the word 'be' with a longer vowel so it doesn't sound 'clipped'.

In Dreams

In Dreams is from the soundtrack of the first Lord of the Rings movie, *The Fellowship of the Ring* and features during the end credits as part of the track 'The Breaking of the Fellowship'. *In Dreams* has a lot of musical motifs and themes that can be heard throughout the rest of the soundtrack for the movie.

There are some long stretches where we do not sing (intro, outro, and in the middle), but these are places where the Orchestra will work their magic so don't lose focus or engagement during these moments.

Even though this song is slow, and we may not sing as many notes as other songs, it is deceptively tricky. For example, at Letter C the entry of "But in dreams," must not be early - in the bar before, sing 3 beats of "...rain" and a 4th beat of rest before "But in dreams" on the 1st beat of Letter C. By contrast, the entry "And in dreams" comes as a pick-up to Letter D, not on the first beat of D.

The phrase beginning in the pick-up to bar 23 is challenging as it reaches the upper vocal range, and doesn't allow for a breath in the middle. Encourage students who might be wary of singing that high to give it a go, but for those that are unable to, they can mouth the words (pretend to sing). The final note we hold of that phrase needs to be held all the way to the 2nd bar of Letter E. You can experiment with "staggered breathing" for this phrase where each singer in the choir takes a quick, small breath at a different time so as to give the illusion of the whole choir singing it as one phrase with no breath.

The section at G and going through H has similar, but slightly different notes/rhythms to the first section so be aware of those changes when rehearsing.

The Power of the Dream

This is a song by Canadian singer Céline Dion. It was written for the opening ceremony of the 1996 Summer Olympics. Dion performed it in front of more than 100,000 people, in addition to over three and a half billion television viewers.

This song is going to finish off our programme and may not be one that students will recognise but it is sure to be a favourite once they know it and have learned it. Go through the lyrics first with the students and maybe play them a version of Celine singing this song to 'hook' students in. The song has been adapted to fit our students so changes have been made to her version but it is still a good chance for the students to hear it before they learn it.

The lyrics are very powerful in this song and so it is a good idea to initially go through the lyrics and the words in this and discuss what the song is trying to say.

Watch the rhythm of the words in bar 16 - 'there's a special part that everyone of us will play'. Each time words such as 'creation' and 'inspiration' are sung, make sure that students keep the vowels open so they do not close on the last syllable - think 'creat -

shon' and 'inspira - shon'. There is a lovely crescendo leading into the chorus again that we would love students to sing confidently.

At letter K, just the representative choirs sing this part but it then leads into Massed Choirs coming in again at Letter M with the Senior choir singing a powerful harmony in this part.

At letter P, near the end we have added a quick rest for students to take a breath before the last phrase. This is to avoid them taking a breath before the very last note. Make sure students keep the last note covered with a round open vowel on 'dreams' and watch the conductor for the cut off at the end.