

# Introduction

The award-winning *Voiceworks* handbooks for singing are now firmly established as an outstanding resource to encourage singing in schools and in the wider community. Their hallmark is a wealth of accessible material, with teaching notes to guide the teacher/leader/conductor in promoting good practice and technique for enjoyable and healthy singing.

For very young children, singing is as natural as breathing. Tiny babies explore a myriad of bubbling, gurgling, ‘sirening’, and blowing sounds long before they speak, and this experimentation is the first stage of singing—a strong indication of the importance of vocalizing as part of our human communication. As practitioners, we should make every attempt to harness this early fascination with vocal sounds and give our young learners ample opportunities to sing as part of their daily life in school.

*Voicelinks* offers teachers a wide range of material to support this natural affinity between singing and learning. It is a songbook for children aged between three and seven, specially devised to be used across the curriculum. The 24 songs bridge Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1 (KS1), fitting chronologically between the other books in the series for this age group—*Voiceplay* and *Young Voiceworks*. Each song is directly linked to aspects of either the EYFS or the KS1 curriculum, providing a rich source of cross-curricular material to connect singing with classroom delivery. There are seven sections, each constructed around a different generic theme; within the sections, each song is carefully graded to one of the following year/age groups:

- EYFS (ages 3–5)
- KS1, Year 1 (ages 5–6)
- KS1, Year 2 (ages 6–7)

The seven sections are:

<b>Section I: All About Me</b>	<i>Exploring self</i>
<b>Section II: Jiggle and Jump</b>	<i>Physical play</i>
<b>Section III: Paint my World</b>	<i>Colours</i>
<b>Section IV: Rain and Shine</b>	<i>Weather</i>
<b>Section V: Tell me a Story</b>	<i>Traditional tales</i>
<b>Section VI: Travelling Here and There</b>	<i>Transport</i>
<b>Section VII: Celebrations</b>	<i>Special days</i>

## ■ The songs

The songs are simple and accessible, and are set out with supporting notes so that non-specialist teachers can teach them successfully. They have been specially selected to meet the needs of young learners and are designed to be taught by rote.

- The music is composed using straightforward patterns, containing simple, repetitive melodies.
- The vocabulary in the lyrics is appropriate to each age group, using suitable images and contexts.
- In many songs, subsequent verses contain only one changing word or line, making them easy to memorize.

- The lyrics have been written to allow children to amend the words and invent new verses, in order to uphold the holistic and child-initiated learning styles that we associate with the best Early Years and KS1 practice.

Each section of the book comprises either one or two songs targeted at each year/age group. The songs have been written to provide progression from one year to the next:

- **EYFS.** Short, simple songs with repeated phrases and using a small range of notes. Lyrics are simple, with only one word or phrase changing between verses. Simple actions are suggested to help children engage with the pulse and timing, such as bowing/waving on cue with the words, or jumping/marching along with the beat. Tempo and expression should be directed by the lyrics. These songs are unaccompanied.
- **KS1, Year 1.** Songs with slightly more challenging lyrics and a larger vocal range, but retaining simple and repetitive melodic ideas. Character and tempo markings are suggested for these songs. Guitar chords are included as an accompaniment option, as are optional percussion parts.
- **KS1, Year 2.** These songs are more extensive, with larger vocal ranges, longer phrases, more words, and some richer harmonies and key changes. The lyrics express more complex ideas and introduce new vocabulary. Some songs have optional counter-melodies (or descants) to add variety and a more interesting texture. Character markings and simple dynamics are given; following these will enhance a performance. Guitar chords are included as an accompaniment option, as are piano parts.

The Song index (page 104) summarizes the character and subject of each song, including its links with areas of the curriculum. It also lists additional songs that could be used when planning around the different themes; some of them are common folk songs or nursery rhymes, and some can be found in books from the *Voiceworks* series, the Sing Up song bank ([www.singup.org](http://www.singup.org)), and other mainstream KS1 and KS2 songbooks.

## ■ The teaching notes

Each song is complemented by a set of activity notes that gives practitioners information about resources, curriculum links, warm ups, and, most importantly, ways of teaching and developing the song; they present a bank of ideas that ‘peg’ each song directly to the curriculum in order to enhance teaching and learning both through and across each topic. These notes are identical in structure for each song:

- **Choose this song.** Outlines learning contexts for the song and lists the subjects/learning areas that are developed through it. Common abbreviations have been used; a key to these abbreviations is provided on page 108.
- **Before you sing.** Ideas for introducing the song and the topic, including sharing observations, ideas, and memories. This section also features physical and vocal warm ups.
- **Singing this song.** A step-by-step guide to teaching and learning the song, breaking it down into simple stages.
- **Developing.** Specific cross-curricular tasks serving the Areas of Learning (EYFS) and varied subjects (KS1 curriculum). This is organized into two subsections: developing the song and developing the topic.

The resource box, found at the head of the teaching notes for each song, lists the key resources provided and where they can be found, as well as suggestions for additional resources for the teacher to prepare. These can be categorized as follows:

- CD tracks (see ‘The CD’, below)

- Additional music scores (e.g. piano accompaniments, percussion parts—see ‘The accompaniments’, below)
- Other resources to support understanding and cross-curricular development:
  - Photocopiable resources such as picture-cards to help with the lyrics. These may be enlarged and copied as necessary for classroom teaching.
  - Word-cards and other props for teachers to prepare before the lesson.
  - Commonly found items including cameras, books, and photographs.

## ■ The CD

The CD includes demos of each song, using a mixture of male and female voices. These offer practitioners who aren’t comfortable with reading music a useful way to learn the songs so that they can then teach the material directly to children using their own voice (although the demos could be used as the principal teaching tool if required). This supports the notion that our youngest singers respond best to vocal activities led by a voice rather than a lavish, multi-tracked accompaniment.

The KS1 songs also include CD backings based on the accompaniments provided in the book (see ‘The accompaniments’, below). These offer teachers and children who have become really confident and familiar with a song the opportunity to sing independently, without vocal support. These tracks would be suitable both for a grand public performance and for everyday singing in the classroom.

- **EYFS.** These tracks include sung introductions to help children prepare for singing; the recorded voice begins with an invitation to sing, using phrases such as ‘Are you ready? Off we go!’, sung on the starter note of the song.
- **KS1, Year 1.** These tracks have guitar and percussion accompaniment, based on the music provided in the book. Introductions and interludes are included as indicated on the vocal scores; these musical interludes can be used to accompany actions or accommodate simple dance steps (as appropriate to the song).
- **KS1, Year 2.** These tracks have piano accompaniment and include counter-melodies and, where appropriate, other suggestions given in ‘Developing the song’.

## ■ The accompaniments

Accompaniments or percussion parts are provided for the KS1 songs and can be added once the songs have been thoroughly learnt and are being sung confidently on their own. As suggested in the teaching notes, the most effective way for children to learn a song is from a clear and confident adult voice, a line at a time, until they can sing it securely. Adding the accompaniments will support and enhance what the children can already do, producing a different and more exciting musical experience for them.

### EYFS

These songs do not have written accompaniments—the best support at this level is the physical presence of the teacher, with clear, large gestures. Often, providing the pulse on a short-sounding, unpitched percussion instrument is all that’s necessary; the children could join in, either by tapping with their hands or fists on their knees, or with a simple instrument (claves are good for this as the sound is not too overpowering).

### KS1, Year 1

These songs can be accompanied by guitar (following the chords given on the vocal score) and include optional percussion parts. The guitar playing should be supportive, so it is important to make the chords clear, with a strong sense of pulse; alternatively, the chords

could be played on the piano. The focus must be on strong and confident singing and engagement with the songs and words, but, when appropriate, the percussion parts can be added by any number of players, provided the singing is still dominant. Teach the percussion parts in the same way as the singing: by rote, demonstrating the part and then inviting the children to echo it. Begin with the simplest unpitched part and build up gradually, adding pitched parts last. Achieve confidence with one part before adding another; this may take several sessions. Children at this age find focusing on their own part among other sounds quite a challenge, so don't rush this process.

The following criteria have been applied to the written parts:

- They have simple, repetitive patterns with a clear structure to make memorizing easy, but require correct starts/stops and careful waiting or counting. Words from the songs are included to help learn rhythms accurately. For pitched percussion parts, the notes used are listed on the score as a guide to preparing the instrument (by taking off the notes not required, if this helps).
- Each song has scope for a number of unpitched instruments, and a part or two for pitched melodic instruments providing some simple harmony or a bass-line. The parts cater for a range of abilities: pitched parts require precision and dexterity with both hands, and memory for longer and sometimes irregular patterns.
- The choice of instruments is for the teacher/children to decide, but they should be chosen from the percussion chart (below) according to the generic label (e.g. 'short unpitched') so that they create the right effect. The instruments used on the CD tracks are given on the music scores. These are ideal but do not have to be used; anything from the same section of the percussion chart will do.
- Introductions and interludes between verses are suggested above the percussion score for each song and correspond with the CD backing.
- The parts provided are a suggestion—it is perfectly permissible to make up extra parts or feature just some of them as required, and to choose whatever instruments are available. It is essential, as part of a positive and worthwhile musical experience, that the instrument parts add something to the performance and support the voices. Better to have excellent unaccompanied singing than a noisy clatter of untidy percussion!

### Percussion chart

	<b>Unpitched</b> <i>Sounds have no definite pitch or note</i>	<b>Pitched</b> <i>Sounds have a definite pitch or note</i>
<b>Short</b> <i>Short or 'dry' sounds that end quickly</i>	tambourine, shaker/maracas, egg shakers, sleigh bells, wood block/temple block, claves, sticks, drums (various sizes)	xylophone (wooden bars), boom whackers
<b>Long</b> <i>Long sounds that hold on and fade slowly</i>	triangle, cymbal roll with beaters, gong, indian bells, rainmaker, vibraslap	glockenspiel, metallophone, chime bars, hand chimes, hand bells

### KS1, Year 2

Printed piano parts are provided to support the voices and add a slightly deeper musical experience with richer harmonies. Guitar chords are also included and these would give secure support for each song. Percussion parts are not provided but can be added to suit the needs of the group by adopting the principles of the Year 1 songs.

# 4 Easy Peasy!



RESOURCES ▶ CD track 4 (demo)  
▶ Room to move freely—a hall or outdoor space would be ideal

## Choose this song

- To sing a song with actions
- To incorporate singing into PE or Dance lessons
- To invent new actions and verses
- **Curriculum links:** CD, PE and Dance

## Before you sing

- Ask the children to demonstrate different ways of moving, both 'on the spot' and travelling around the room. Encourage them to use appropriate vocabulary to describe their actions, e.g. jumping, hopping, bouncing, stepping, etc.

## Warm ups

- Play a 'copycat' movement game: demonstrate an action, e.g. nod your head, and ask the children to join in as quickly as they can. Try two successive actions, such as wiggling noses followed by tapping knees.
- Move around and make sounds at the same time! Jump on each strong-beat syllable of a silly alliterative phrase such as 'jump-ing jel-ly-fish', 'leap-ing lol-li-pop', or 'smil-ing sau-sa-ges'.

## Singing this song

- Sing the first verse or play the CD track to the children, tapping with your toes on each beat.
- Encourage the children to sing along and join in with the toe-tapping.
- Now sing through the whole song. The rhythm for the changing words is flexible; these words should be sung to a rhythm that best fits their meaning, as demonstrated on the CD track. When it is familiar, introduce actions that correspond to the words, e.g. jumping in verse 2.

- Can the children keep the actions steady and sing without rushing?
- Do the actions fall exactly on each beat?

## Developing

### The song

- Encourage the children to make up new verses that include different types of actions and levels of movement, e.g. 'Crawl about, like me', 'Grab a star, like me'.
- Work together to choreograph a performance of three linked verses:
  - A first verse involving moving 'on the spot', e.g. 'Twirl around, like me'.
  - A second verse that travels away, e.g. 'Run away, like me'.
  - A third verse, with different travelling actions, to bring everyone back to their place, e.g. 'Tip-toe back, like me'.
- Encourage solo performances if individual children are sufficiently confident.
- This song makes an ideal warm-up activity for PE or Dance lessons, with many possible variations.

### The topic

- Ask the children to teach their three-verse versions to another class as part of a Sports Day or Healthy Schools event, or hold a 'Jig-a-thon' that involves the whole school in jiggling and jumping!

# 4 Easy Peasy!

Sue Nicholls

1. Tap your toes, like me, tap your toes, like me,

The first line of music is written on a single staff in treble clef, key of D major (two sharps), and 2/4 time. It consists of four measures. The first measure contains a quarter note on G4, a quarter note on A4, and a quarter note on B4. The second measure contains a quarter note on C5, a quarter rest, and a quarter note on B4. The third measure contains a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on G4, and a quarter note on F4. The fourth measure contains a quarter note on E4, a quarter rest, and a quarter note on D4.

5 tap your toes, like me! It's ea - sy as can be!

The second line of music is written on a single staff in treble clef, key of D major, and 2/4 time. It consists of four measures. The first measure contains a quarter note on G4, a quarter note on A4, and a quarter note on B4. The second measure contains a quarter note on C5, a quarter rest, and a quarter note on B4. The third measure contains a quarter note on A4, a quarter note on G4, and a quarter note on F4. The fourth measure contains a quarter note on E4, a quarter rest, and a quarter note on D4. The piece ends with a double bar line and repeat dots.

2. *Jump about . . .*
3. *Bend your knees . . .*
4. *Swing your hips . . .*
5. *Creep around . . .*
6. *Gallop round . . .*
7. *March back to your place . . .*  
*Stand and look at me.*

# 9 Paintbox

Year 2  
6-7

- RESOURCES**
- ▶ CD tracks 10 (demo) and 31 (backing)
  - ▶ Piano accompaniment, page 78
  - ▶ Paint charts showing artists' colours and pigments; decorating shade cards from commercial paint companies
  - ▶ A list of colour names found in the song lyrics and, if possible, the shades to match
  - ▶ White cotton fabric cut into triangles

## Choose this song

- To introduce the names of paint colours used in school
- To explore the more unusual names of pigments used by artists
- To encourage adventurous experimentation in colour combinations and paint mixing
- **Curriculum links: Art and Design**

## Before you sing

- Before the lesson, find out whether any of the children have paintboxes; ask them to bring in paintings they have done at home.
- Look at the paint charts at the start of the lesson, relishing the sound of some of the lovely words (e.g. vermilion and cobalt blue), and talk about favourite names and colours. Can any of the children tell you what colour their bedroom is painted?
- Ask the children to make up exotic names for colours, e.g. candy-floss pink.
- Put the names (and shades if available) of the colours mentioned in the song on display in a random order, and ensure that the children are familiar with them.

## Warm ups

- Hop on one foot and then the other.
- Swing your arms like a soldier; then swing them in front of and behind your body, crossing over.
- Shrug your shoulders up and down so that your neck disappears and then slowly reappears.
- Warm up voices using unusual colour names in this rap ('Paint Pot Polka'). Encourage the children to perform appropriate moves.

Beige, beige—it's all the rage!  
Purple Lake—shimmy and shake!  
Charcoal Grey—you just sashay!  
Burnt Umber—limbo under!  
Yellow Ochre—dance a polka!  
Iridescent White—fly like a kite!  
Raw Sienna—a waltz from Vienna!  
Cadmium Green—it's a groovy scene!

## Singing this song

- Sing the song to the children or play the CD demo track. Can they tell you which colours were paired up in the song, e.g. 'mauve and cobalt'? Did they hear echoes at the end of each verse?
- Try singing the opening melody (up to 'haven't tried!'). The tune is almost the same for both sentences.
- Now tackle the middle section (bars 7–10), noticing that the melody is made up of stepping notes that first ascend steadily for 'Crimson, aqua: each one's new!' and then descend for 'We've found mauve and cobalt too!'
- Next sing or play the last section, asking the children to join in with the echoed word 'Paintbox'.
- Put the whole verse together, and ask a small group to provide the echoes. Then add verse 2. Encourage the children to get quieter and quieter through the echoes of 'Paintbox' at the very end.
- Are the syncopated patterns, e.g. 'look inside!', sung accurately?
- Is the stepping note section sung really smoothly to give a contrast to the bouncier rhythms in the outer sections?
- Is the singing in tune as voices step up and down in pitch?

## Developing

### The song

- Try adding a tuned instrument, e.g. a xylophone or glockenspiel, to the middle section (the notes all step up and down so it would be easy to teach by rote). Begin on the middle G and move up or down one note at a time, in line with the melody:  
G G A A | B B C ♯ | D C B A | G G G ♯
- In the final line, encourage some of the children to sing the 'Paintbox' calls as solos; ask the rest of the class to join in on the echoes.
- Once the song is familiar, see if the children can substitute new colour names (e.g. sapphire, maroon) in the song, making sure that the new colours match the number of syllables in the original. Perhaps they can add some from the colour charts!

## The topic

- Compare the artists' colour names with those found on the decorators' shade cards. Can the children match up the colours with the names from both sources? Are the names very different?
- Try tie-dying triangles of white cotton fabric using strong, vibrant colours, to create amazing bandanas to wear for a special performance. Ask everyone to wear their most colourful clothes for this occasion.
- Design and paint some wonderful costumes to wear for the 'Paint Pot Polka' rap using exciting and daring colour combinations!

# 9 Paintbox

Words and melody: Sue Nicholls

Accompaniment: Peter Hunt

With a light blue swing ♩ = 120 (♩ = ♪♪)

Intro

(C F|A♭ G)

Paint-box, paint-box, look in - side! So ma - ny co-lours I

have-n't tried! Crim - son, a - qua: each one's new! We've found mauve and  
Tur-quoise, am - ber: bronze and

co - balt too! — It's a box full of tricks, lots of co-lours to mix.  
chest-nut

Paint - box! (Paint-box!) Paint - box! (Paint-box!) Paint - box! (Paint-box!)

Paint - box! (Paint-box!) Paint - box! (Paint-box!) Paint - box! (Paint-box!)



# 9 Paintbox

## Piano accompaniment

Words and melody: Sue Nicholls

Accompaniment: Peter Hunt

With a light blue swing ♩ = 120 (♩♩ = ♩♩♩)

Voices

*mf*

Paint-box, paint-box,

Piano

*f*

*mf staccato*

4

look in - side!\_ So ma - ny co-lours I have-n't tried!\_

7

*mp* *mf*

Crim - son, a - qua: each one's new! We've found mauve and  
Tur - quoise, am - ber: bronze and

*mp* *mf*

10 *f*

*co - balt  
chest-nut* too! — It's a box full of tricks, lots of co-lours to mix.

G C7 F7 D7 G7

13

Paint - box! (Paint - box!) Paint - box! (Paint - box!)

F7 C7 G

1

15b 2 *mp* *p*

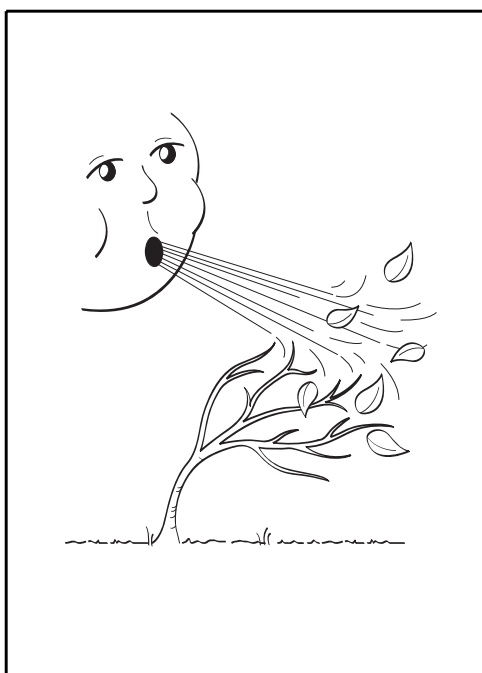
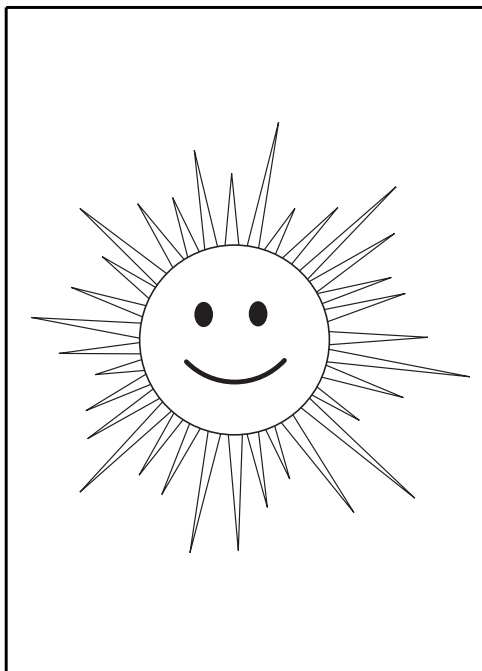
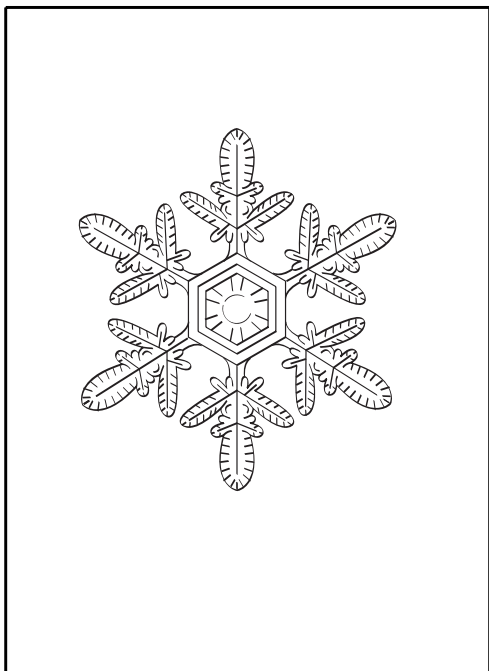
Paint-box! (Paint-box!) Paint-box! (Paint-box!) Paint-box! (Paint-box!) Paint-box! (Paint-box!)

F7 C7 F7 C7 trem.

*mp* *p* *pp*

# 10 Feel the snowflakes

## Weather picture-cards



# 11 Weather-boy, weather-girl

## Weather picture-cards

