SINGING AT THE HEART OF THE CURRICULUM!

WARM UPS

For every singing session, apportion approximately a sixth of your time to warm-ups: always include physical, posture/facial, breathing and vocal activities.

Physical warm-ups:

Head swings: Fix eyes on the point where the wall meets the ceiling and gradually ‘sweep’ down the wall, along the carpet and up the opposite wall: now reverse the action.

Shoulder rolls: the size of eggs, tennis balls, beach ball

Shrug shoulders up to ears, hold and then release.

Posture:

Feet slightly apart – approximately the width of hips – feet parallel.

Soft knees: no tension in the legs.

Breathing: think of a ‘tum tank’ of air rather than ‘lungs’

Expel old air- say ‘whoooo’ as it leaves the body.

Push out the ‘tum’ and feel it fill with air—use arms as indicators and guard against shoulders rising.

KS1:
Imagine that you’ve filled a swimming ring but it has a puncture so hiss the air out. The leader mends the puncture by touching both index fingers together, so the children hold their breath. The leader move fingers apart and the hissing starts again.

KS2:
Use arms as indicators and guard against shoulders rising. Hold the breath then on a count of 4, release the air in a measured fashion while hissing audibly – lower arms as if forcing the air out. Increase the number gradually to 12.

Vocal:

KS1: Take a line for a walk: use index finger to create pitch line patterns in the air: left to right, up and down. Follow the line using ‘ng’ sound.

KS2: Frozen peas: It’s Christmas Eve and you’ve forgotten the peas for Christmas Dinner! You fight your way into the supermarket and there is the chest freezer is one last packet. You’re just reaching to get it when you see your long-lost friend, Brenda –you haven’t seen her since nursery school! You want to call out and catch her attention. but you need those frozen peas, so grab the packet, lift it up high to greet her ‘H…e…l…l…o! … sliding your voice from it’s lowest note [down in the freezer] to it’s highest!
UNIT 1: VOCAL STARTERS – songs and raps to start the lesson

EYFS/Y1: GO BANANAS!

Curriculum focus: Literacy [sequencing, instructions, action words /verbs]
An irresistible action rap with a small range of notes

Bananas of the world unite! *Raise hands and clasp above head*
Pick bananas; pick, pick bananas
Peel bananas; peel, peel bananas
Chop bananas; chop, chop bananas
Mash bananas; mash, mash bananas
Blend bananas; blend, blend bananas
Pour bananas; pour, pour bananas
Drink bananas; drink, drink bananas
GO bananas; go, go bananas!
Bananas of the world unite!

Lower KS2: HI! MY NAME IS BRAD from The Manchester Singing School series Year 3

Curriculum focus: Brian Gym, music [duration [rhythm] [The asterisks are finger clicks/claps]

Hi * * my name is Brad * *
I've got a sister * she nearly drives me mad * *
Fiddle dee dum * * Fiddle dee dee * *
If only she could * be good *
She'd be as nice as me *

Hi * * my name is Joy * *
I've got a brother * an awful little boy * *
Fiddle dee dum * * Fiddle dee dee * *
If only he could * be good *
He'd be as nice as me *

Hi * * I'm one of the teachers * *
I've got a class * of 'orrible little creatures* *
Fiddle dee dum * * Fiddle dee dee * *
If only they could * be good *
I'd take them all to McDonalds for tea!

TASK: Write new verses:

Hi * * my name is ????????? ? *

UPPER KS2: FUNGA ALAFIA

Curriculum focus: PSHE [Greeting song for assembly]

Funga Alafia, asie, asie
Funga alafie, asie, asie

A delightful song from West Africa in the Yoruba language means: ‘Give us peace, thank you, thank you’. Sing as a canon in two parts.
UNIT 2: MY TURN –YOUR TURN  Echo and ‘Call and Response’ songs

EYFS/KS1: CALICO IS A CHARMING CAT! from Singing Sherlock 3
Curriculum focus: Science [living things], Literacy [syllables, rhyme, alliteration]
An echo song about different creatures; watch out for phrases of different length!
**TASK:** Write a new character verse

LOWER KS2: THERE WAS AN OLD WOMAN  Traditional American
Curriculum focus: Literacy [sequencing a story, writing settings/ atmosphere]
A chiller of a song, written in a minor key and designed to scare the audience with its final shout!

L: There was an old woman all skin and bone Group: Oo-oo-oo-ooo
L: She lived down by the old church yard Group: Oo-oo-oo-ooo
L: One night she thought she’d take a walk Group: Oo-oo-oo-ooo
L: she walked down by the old grave yard Group: Oo-oo-oo-ooo
L: She saw some bones a-laying around Group: Oo-oo-oo-ooo
L: She went to the closet to find a broom Group: Oo-oo-oo-ooo
L: She opened the door and….. Group: [shout] BOOOOO!

UPPER KS 2: SORIDA  A traditional Zimbabwean welcome song with actions
Curriculum focus: PSHE [greeting, working together], music [harmony/texture], Geography
This lovely song is based on one chord so pairs of singers can perform in quite complicated canon or change the speed for an interesting vocal texture.

Sorida, sorida, [circle then clap on ‘da’] ri-da, ri-da, [touch back of partners’ hands] x2
**NB:** for ‘right, left, right’, substitute, both hands clapping x3 if it’s easier!
UNIT 3: BEYOND THE CLASSROOM Playground songs

EYFS/KS1: BROWN BREAD AND BUTTER from ‘Beginning Circle Games’ by John Feierabend.

Curriculum focus: Literacy [alliteration, adjectives]

Brown bread and butter-O,
On a summer’s morning-O,
If you want someone to sing
[Leader] Call on Magic Mary-O!

M is for Mary-O
On a summer’s morning-O,
If you want someone to sing
[Leader] Call on Leaping Liam-O!

The leader chooses someone, [Mary], to stand in the circle, everyone sings the first three lines, but the leader then appoints a new ‘singer’ by singing the fourth as a solo. Everyone sings the first letter of the new child’s name for verse 2 and the game continues in this fashion.

Y3/4: BUILT MY LADY from ‘Beginning Circle Games by John Feierabend

Curriculum focus: Dance, Numeracy [3x table, problem solving]

A simple game song where the middle child of three [the lady] moves on every verse.

Arrange the children in 3 - two holding hands and one in the middle During the first two lines the children holding hands dance around the third [one phrase to the left, one phrase to the right] child who then ‘escapes’ during lines three and four to enter the next couple’s ring.

UPPER KS2: E PAPA WAIARI Traditional Maori stick song

Curriculum focus: Geography, Brian Gym [Eye/hand coordination], Music [rhythm]

This Maori stick song is performed in pairs; try learning the chorus first and take plenty of time to master the words, melody and actions.

1. E papā Waiari, taku nei mahi, Taku nei mahi, he tuku roimata
2. Chorus: É aue, ka mate au; E hine hoki mai rā
3. Māku e kaute ōhikoitanga, Māku e kaute ōhikoitanga
4. Chorus: É aue, ka mate au; E hine hoki mai rā

Meaning:

1. O elder Waiari my habit has been, my habit has been to shed tears
2. Chorus: Alas I will die; oh girl, return to me
3. I will count your footsteps, I will count your footsteps
4. Chorus: Alas I will die; oh girl, return to me

Stick actions counted in threes: everyone sits on the floor holding two sticks, facing a partner:

1: Tap the sticks three times on the floor by your left knee, flipping the sticks over i.e. using a different ‘end’ on each tap. Do the same by your right knee.

2: Tap both sticks on the floor in front of you then make two taps in the air with crossed sticks

3: Three moves:
A] Tap both stick on the floor in front of you
B] Knock your sticks together along the long sides,
C] Tap your right stick against partner’s right stick

Repeat but tap partner’s left stick

**EYFS/KS1: EN ROULANT**  ‘Simple Songs and Circles by John Feierabend

Curriculum focus: PE, Music [duration]

The aim is to fill the musical phrase with the rolling of the ball – giving a simple interpretation of a phrase

**LOWER KS2: TOES A-TWINKLIN’** from Singing Sherlock 3

Curriculum focus: Dance A circle dance song in Country and Western style … Yee ha!

**TASK:** Perform one of the activities from ‘Singing Breakfast Clubs’ pack

**MORE WARM-UPS!**

**Physical:**

Exaggerated yawns with arm movements to open and relax the throat and expand the chest
Swing arms - like ‘soldiers’ but also across the front and back of the body
Shake arms – suddenly stop – feel the ‘tingle’
Root feet to the floor and turn upper body to look behind, left and right
Pelvic circles [mime hula hoop action]

**Posture**

To open the chest: The wrong way: arms out to the side, thumbs down, bring arms to sides and feel the shoulders rolled inward. The right way: thumbs up and bring arms to sides and feel the shoulders roll out.

**Breathing**

Fill tum tank and blow a sustained breath on to the palm of the hand – so the breath is controlled. Blow harder [cool breath] and more gently [warm breath] and feel the tum wall pulling in towards the back

**Vocal**

Peter Hunt’s vowel exercises from ‘Voiceworks’ published by OUP sung on one note but raising the pitch for each new phrase
UNIT 4: WATER

EYFS/KS1 PROTECT ME, MY FRIEND [Traditional] taken from Manchester Singing Schools Book 3
Curriculum focus: RE [a prayer], PSHE [reflections about others]
This gentle reflective song could be used as a prayer for fishermen or those who work on the sea.

LOWER KS2: WHO DID SWALLOW JONAH? ‘Echo songs’ by John Feierabend
Curriculum focus: RE [Bible characters]
Who did? Who did? Who did? Who did? Who did swallow Jo, Jo, Jo, Jo [x3]
Who did swallow, Jonah? x2
Who did swallow Jonah, down, down, down, down!
Whale did! Whale did! etc. [as first verse]
Daniel, Daniel, Daniel, Daniel in the li, li, li, li [x3]
Daniel in the lion’s x2
Daniels in the lion’s den, den, den, den!
Noah, Noah, Noah, Noah, Noah in the arky, arky [x3]
Noah in the arky x2
Noah in the arky, sailed, sailed, sailed, sailed!
A lively echo song that uses the names of Biblical characters: Jonah, Daniel and Noah

UPPER KS2: OLD NOAH from ‘The Song Stack’ available from www.mesdirect.com
Curriculum focus: RE, Literacy
A ‘Call & Response song with jazzy ‘blues’ notes and short two-part chorus lines
UNIT 5: HAVING FUN?

EYFS/KS1: OFF ON HOLIDAY from ‘The Song Stack’ available from www.mesdirect.com
Curriculum focus: Numeracy [ordering], Literacy [story sequencing], Science [materials], PSHE
A cumulative song about items to pack for a holiday! Use real props and write new versions:
‘Santa’s on his way, riding on his sleigh, so don’t forget some choccies for gran to bring on Xmas Day!

TASK: Write a new set of lyrics…Going shopping, hooray! …...

LOWER KS2: COME AND SING TOGETHER Traditional Hungarian  Curriculum focus: dance
A bubbly song that can be sung as a round up to 16 parts!

Dance performed as a canon in groups of four, partners facing:
4 steps forward, 4 steps backwards [repeat]
Clap both hands to the left, both to the right [repeat]
4 steps turning round on the spot
4 steps forward, 4 steps backwards [repeat]

UPPER KS2: SHABUYA! A rap in which to substitute new activities
Curriculum focus: PSHE [identity, self-assurance & achievement]
Shabuya! Ha! Ha!
Shabuya! Whoaaaaaa!
Shabuya! Ha! Ha!
Shabuya! Whoaaaaaa!

[A] We are Year 5!  
[B] Yeah!
[A] We are Year 5!  
[B] Yeah!
[A] We like our football  
[B] Yeah!
[A] We like our swimming  
[B] Yeah! …

TASK: Invent more ideas for this rap!

YET MORE WARM-UPS!

Physical
‘Rubber chicken’: shake each arm and leg in order first to 8 beats, then four, then two and finally one!
Dotty scalps – a ‘wake-up’ activity - use fingertips to tap a pathway along a centre parting down to the nape of the neck and up again. Widen the space between fingers and repeat twice more

Facial warm-up:
Chew a huge imaginary piece of rock to exercise the jaw [don't forget to use the tongue too]
Screw the face up like a paper bag: on a clapped signal stretch it out as if painted on a balloon
Practise lifting the eye-brows to create a smiling ‘mask’ with tight, high cheeks, then let your face ‘slide’ back to a relaxed impassive expression. Move your hand up and down in front of your face to signal these changes

Posture:
Arms: imagine carrying two carrier bags containing something light, like a newspaper
Vocal:

Relax your face, mouth and jaw by blowing out through loose lips making them vibrate. You'll produce the sound that horses make! It looks really funny and will make everyone laugh and that’s no bad way to start a singing session.

Sing these nonsense syllables to the tune of ‘Three Blind Mice’. The sounds will certainly get your lips and tongue working, warm up your tonsils and hopefully make you smile! Exaggerate every mouth shape as you sing!

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Bloo, blah, blee!                [repeat]
Bloo, blah, blee!                [repeat]
Be bloo-be-doo-berry, doodle dee! [repeat twice more]
Be bloo, blah, bee!              [repeat]
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UNIT 6: FAR AWAY!

**EYFS/KS1: CHAMNIAMO GOGO**  A Kenyan ‘Call and Response song’ from www.lindsaymusic.co.uk

Curriculum focus: PSHE [working together], Dance, Literacy [instructions and sequence]

First turn around, *Chamniamo Gogo*
Then go to ground, *Chamniamo Gogo*
Wave your arms and pull a face, *Chamniamo Gogo*
Funny walk around your place, *Chamniamo Gogo*       Chamniamo Gogo means ‘Let’s go walking’

Sing in pairs, one a ‘caller’ the other’ as ‘responder’ i.e. master and slave or puppeteer and puppet!

**LOWER KS2: THE BAND** from ‘Banana Splits’ published by A & C Black

Curriculum focus: Science [Sound], Music [instruments, texture, dynamics]

A very simple main tune that begins quietly and crescendos as the band reaches the town then fades away. Over this melody two additional parts are sung, representing drums and woodwind.

**UPPER KS2: COLUMBUS** from ‘Tongo’ a ‘Sing for Pleasure’ booklet

Curriculum focus: History [seafarers] Geography

A fairly demanding but very satisfying round in three parts composed by the inimitable Jan Holdstock
UNIT 7: MUSIC THEATRE

KS1: AMASEE from ‘Call & Response’ songs by John Feierabend
A dance song that needs some inventive choreography!

KS2: WELCOME, BIENVENUE! [SLN]
A three-part welcome song for you to choreograph and perform