

16 Cape Cod chanty

RESOURCES ▶ CD1 track 16 (performance); CD2 track 16 (backing)
▶ Warm ups: Nos. 15, 20, 26

Information

This is a classic sea shanty, sung by sailors on the long voyage from Cape Cod in Massachusetts, USA, to the far-away south Australia. On the Internet you can find snippets of recordings by fierce-sounding sailors, with interesting variants on the words. Here is another strong tune built on the pentatonic or five-note scale and including call and response, but in this song the calls and responses are different. There are lots of interesting words and expressions and a two-part chorus. The final chorus is sung slower to provide a really stirring climax.

Starting

- Explain the background to the song, and the image of sailors heaving on ropes on their long journey to Australia.
- Now teach the repeated phrases of the verses—'Heave away! Heave away!' and 'We are bound for Australia'—call and response style.
- Sing verse 1 to the group; children will spot where these phrases slot in. Repeat, and get them to join in with these phrases.

Teaching and rehearsing

- Work through the words and tune for each verse, using the notes of the D major chord on the piano to help with pitching. Explore and explain the meaning of any unfamiliar words or phrases.
- Now move on to the chorus and teach the tune (Part 2) for bars 11–12 and 15–16, which is the same both times.
- Introduce the slide on the words 'Go heave'. Count 1 2 3 and start on the fourth beat, grading the slide to reach the top D' on the first beat of the next bar, sliding evenly between notes. Children will enjoy doing this, so have some fun! Now sing the chorus together.
- Everything should now be in place for a rousing, unison version of the whole song. Try it through without stopping—don't be too fussy!—going back afterwards to correct any obvious mistakes.
- Repetition is important to cement learning, so make sure your group is really competent and confident before you suggest they sing in two parts. They will know there is more to learn if they have heard the CD.
- Teach everyone the harmony part (Part 1) as a distinct tune—the leap in bar 16 will need practice—and point out that the slide is the same in both parts, each time.
- Divide the group in two and have a go at the whole song. As before, don't stop at the first problem—keep

going. This time, pause on the D at the end of the final verse and, making sure everyone is watching you, slide into the final chorus which is performed slower (listen to the CD to hear how it should be done). Enjoy it!

Ideas

- The verses should be softer than the choruses. Every time the word 'heave' appears, make the music warmer by adding a crescendo.
- Different soloists could perform the 'call' for some of the verses. This will provide variety and is a good way to reward excellent singers.
- Add a suitable two-handed pulling movement to 'Heave away! Heave away!'. Talk about sailing ships, and how all hands were required to heave and haul the ropes controlling the sails at the masthead.
- Now add a suitable movement to 'We are bound for Australia!'—perhaps bringing one hand to the forehead as if scanning the horizon—and discuss who might have been sailing to Australia.

Listen out

- Can you hear every word? There is plenty to listen for, but look as well. Are mouths moving together like bows in the string section of a good orchestra?
- Make sure nobody is overdoing the slides. They add something to the song but only if done properly. Don't worry if the second slide begins on both A and D.
- Check that the middle syllable of 'Australia' is sung to an 'air' vowel sound. You don't need to sound Australian!

Performing

- Shanties are traditionally sung unaccompanied, but the support provided by piano or CD backing makes for a more accomplished sound.
- Consider adding the movements suggested above. Do you have any soloists who could sing some of the verses?
- Make sure you have rehearsed the tempo change for the last chorus, especially if you intend to perform with the backing track.

16 Cape Cod chanty

New England
arr. Kevin Stannard

With conviction ♩ = 130

1. Cape Cod girls they
2. Cape Cod boys they
3. Cape Cod men they
4. Cape Cod wives they

4

have no combs, They
have no sleds, Heave a - way! They
have no sails, Heave a - way! They
have no pins, They

7

comb their hair with cod - fish bones,
slide down - hill on cod - fish heads, We are bound for Aus -
sail their boats with cod - fish tails,
pin their gowns with cod - fish fins,