

# Practice tips

## 1 Rivers of Babylon

*Traditional Jamaican*

- You will probably recognise this song's chorus (bars 3–10/20–7), but the verse (bars 11–19) may be less familiar. Listen carefully to the CD backing before singing, and make sure that you are confident with the syncopated (off-beat) rhythms that appear in the verses.
- Try to hold onto the semibreve notes in bar 8 ('wept') and bars 18–19 ('strange land'). The temptation will be to cut them short.
- Dynamic contrast will really bring this song to life; follow the dynamics suggested in the music, making the final chorus strong and confident.

## 2 Loch Lomond

*Traditional Scottish*

- It is virtually impossible to sing this song without the vague hint of a Scottish accent!
- The chorus needs to have crisp, clear consonants and lively, vibrant dotted rhythms. This will contrast really well with the even quavers found in the verses.
- Watch out for the piano part in verse 2: it moves above the vocal melody here. This is a good opportunity for you to test whether you can keep the tune going successfully by yourself. If you find this tricky, sing verse 1 a few times so that the melody is really clear in your mind.

## 3 Abide with me

*Words by Henry F. Lyte*

*Music by William H. Monk*

- Allow the words to determine where you breathe in this song. This will change from verse to verse depending on where the commas and full stops fall. The ✓ in the music will help guide you on this.
- The piano has a more fluid part in verse 2, so it is important to sustain the notes of the melody and sing through the vowels for as long as possible.
- In verse 3 the piano has the original melody but the voice has a different melody that sits above it. Listen very carefully to the CD backing in order to learn the new melody; the track includes the vocal line on a flute to help you.

## 13 4 Ev'ry time we say goodbye

*Words and Music by Cole Porter*

- Aim for a really smooth sound in the opening few phrases by singing through the vowels. Make sure the diphthong on 'time' comes at the last moment.
- Make sure the pitch is really secure in bars 13–20. There are quite a few chromatic notes here; watch out for the A natural on 'know' followed by the A flat on 'think'.
- The semiquaver twiddles on the words 'go' (bars 19–20) and 'goodbye' (bars 35 & 51) should sound easy and relaxed.

# Jerusalem

5 piano accompaniment

The poem by William Blake was inspired by the apocryphal story that Jesus travelled to England during his 'lost years'. Blake implies that a visit from Jesus would briefly create heaven in England – a stark contrast to the 'dark Satanic Mills' of the Industrial Revolution. The song was used by the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies and during the 1920s Women's Institutes (WI) around the country started closing meetings by singing it. See page 6 for practice tips.

Words by William Blake  
Music by Hubert Parry  
arr. Pam Wedgwood

Stately and with passion ♩ = 60

The first system of the musical score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a whole rest for three measures, followed by a quarter rest and a quarter note G4. The piano accompaniment starts with a fortissimo (f) dynamic, featuring a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a simple bass line in the left hand. The dynamic changes to mezzo-forte (mf) at the end of the system.

And did those

The second system of the musical score begins at measure 5. The vocal line continues with the lyrics "feet in an - cient time Walk up - on Eng - land's moun - tains". There are checkmarks above the notes for "feet" and "Walk". The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern, ending with a quarter rest in the final measure.

The third system of the musical score begins at measure 8. The vocal line continues with the lyrics "green? And was the ho - ly lamb of God On Eng-land's plea-sant pas - tures". There are checkmarks above the notes for "green?", "ho", and "On". The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern, ending with a quarter rest in the final measure.

# Ombra mai fù **Largo** from *Xerxes*

 piano accompaniment

This is the opening aria sung by the main character Xerxes in the Handel opera of the same name. He is admiring the shade of a plane tree. See page 7 for practice tips.

G. F. Handel  
English singing translation by Heidi Pegler

**Larghetto** ♩ = 75

8

15

*p* —————

Om - - - bra mai\_ fù, di ve - ge -  
Un - - - der your\_ bough, oh my be -

22

✓ *mf* ✓ *p*

- ta - bi - le, ca - ra ed a - ma - bi - le, so - a - ve più, om - bra mai\_  
- lov - ed tree, splen- dour and har - mo- ny, are with you now, un - der your\_