



# SingingWell

SPRING 2022

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*Resources to support  
mental health and wellbeing  
in our school  
and wider communities*

## Introduction

Enfield Music Service has developed our SingingWell project to create flexible resources for schools that can be used across EYFS, KS1, KS2 and KS3 to promote singing in school and to support wellbeing and mental health for both pupils and staff.

So why are we asking you to sing? Because the power of music is strong!

*Taking part in regular musical activity, particularly singing, brings positive impacts for individuals, school communities, and for our community as a whole.*

*Singing relieves stress and tension through the release of endorphins, which lowers anxiety and boosts confidence and self-esteem.*

*Singing improves social inclusion and sense of community, helping combat feelings of loneliness and isolation.*

*Singing offers a way to express feelings and develop mindfulness.*

*Singing has physiological benefits including increased lung capacity, overall cardiac health and can also reduce pain symptoms [[source](#)].*

The seventh song in our SingingWell series is Unfinished Story by Gareth Malone and Catherine de Sybel and is published in conjunction with Children's Mental Health Week on 7<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> February 2022. In the following pages you can find the lyrics and teaching guidance notes & suggestions from our Head of Singing, Elena Browne. There are also links to download the performance track and backing track from London Grid for Learning (LGfL).

We will continue to produce a new resource each term to share with schools which will be chosen carefully each time to explore different themes around this topic, as well as to promote the general benefits of good quality singing and regular participation in musical activities.

You can download the resources for all the previous songs in the series from our pages on The Hub [here](#).

We hope that you'll find these resources useful, that you and your pupils will have fun with them, and that across Enfield we'll hear schools and their communities singing up and SingingWell!

Wendy Kemp  
Head of Enfield Music Service

## Unfinished Story

Mine is an unfinished story, so many chapters ahead  
So many thousands of pages, so many words yet unsaid  
How can I be the hero? How will I know what is right?  
Who else will enter the pages? Who else will help me to write?

*I write the story, I write the words  
This is a story that needs to be heard  
I choose the message, I choose the song,  
I choose what happens when something goes wrong.  
My life, my hope, my right, my wrong, my struggle, my story, my song,  
My life, my hope, my right, my wrong, my struggle, my story, my song*

I may not know when it's ended, I can't remember the start  
I'll make mistakes on these pages, but I'm doing it all from the heart

*I write the story, I write the words  
This is a story that needs to be heard  
I choose the message, I choose the song,  
I choose what happens when something goes wrong.  
My life, my hope, my right, my wrong, my struggle, my story, my song.  
My life, my hope, my right, my wrong, my struggle, my story, my song*

Voice 1:

*I write the story, I write the words  
This is a story that needs to be heard  
I choose the message, I choose the song,  
I choose what happens when something goes wrong.  
I write the story, I write the words  
This is a story that needs to be heard  
I choose the message, I choose the song,  
I choose what happens when something goes wrong.*

Voice 2:

*My life, my hope, my right, my wrong,  
my struggle, my story my song.  
My life, my hope, my right, my wrong,  
my struggle, my story my song.  
My life, my hope, my right, my wrong,  
my struggle, my story my song.  
My life, my hope, my right, my wrong*

I write the story, I write the words  
This is a story that needs to be heard

## Download links

[Performance track](#)

[Backing track](#)

[Voice 1 track](#)

[Voice 2 track](#)

## Guidance Notes

### Who is going to be singing?

Our *SingingWell* songs are designed to be accessible for all our young singers and can be approached in several ways. There are further suggestions below for how to be creative about involving all your singers. Upper KS2 and KS3 will be able to divide the voices in the last chorus. KS1 and lower KS2, if singing by themselves, will probably sing in unison. Perfect for whole school singing assemblies, class singing, choirs and performances there are a range of possibilities.

### Before you begin

Using the guidance and notes below, familiarize yourself with the song and decide how you will personalize to your singers and your school community. Consider what the most appropriate approach is for your singers and the context/environment in which you are singing.

### Starting out

This is a brand-new song and will therefore be unfamiliar to everyone! This means really focussed listening.

Display the lyrics to follow. Ask older children to consider the title and what they think it means.

### Warm up

Sitting up tall and straight, making sure we feel positive and ready. Wake up the faces, have a stretch and a yawn. Have a good shake out of the eyebrows, nose, ears and mouth. Find imaginary strings on heads and shoulders and stretch to ensure good posture.

Stretch smiles all the way out and raise the eyebrow and cheeks to feel uplifted and ready. Look in your imaginary mirror and give an *Oooh* and then an *Aaah*.

Breathe in for a count of 4, hold for 4, then out as slowly as you can to a count of 4. Repeat breathing out to a count of 8, then 12, and even 16!

## Teaching and rehearsing

Listen to the performance track, focusing on the message and the words.

Start with the chorus which consists of two parts. Listen to the track again and join in with the chorus each time. This allows you to familiarize yourselves with the verses.

Start the chorus quietly and make the repeat of the words louder to add some variety

Take care that the second section of the chorus from *My life, my hope*, is not snatched and jumpy. Join the short phrases together to create a seamless melody

Although the chorus divides at the end, singing in unison will work just fine.

The melody of the verse is mostly simple with plenty of repetition. Take care at the ends of phrases to sing the correct notes. Note that the phrases do not start on the beat. Practice starting each phrase to get the feel of the rhythm.

Think about how you would tell a story and how you would communicate the message and ideas. Sing with commitment, clarity and expression.

## Extra tips

Think about how to use dynamics and tone in the song to communicate emotion and expression. Each section is defined by different musical features. How can you emphasize these to create an engaging performance? Think of the song like a painting, using colours and shades to enhance.

As always, actions are great for enhancing the communication of a song but take care that this does not detract from the singing and the words. Alternatively, you could replace some sections of singing with actions or signing.

In the chorus, encourage singers to take a breath at different times to create a flow to the tune.

For a performance, consider dividing up the phrases of the chorus for soloists or small groups to create the effect of individual thoughts and expressions.

## **Musical development ideas**

Brainstorm words and ideas around aspects of our lives and create your own lyrics to the second part of the chorus ie; *My \_\_\_\_\_, my \_\_\_\_\_* etc;

For older singers, listen to other songs which reflect on life's journey. *Memory* from Cats is a reflection on the life of *Grizabella*, once a glamourous cat who has now fallen on hard times. The lyrics of *Memory* are based on the T.S Elliot poems *Rhapsody on a Windy Night* and *Prelude*. How do the words and music evoke the emotion and feeling of the character?

Using a poem or a character in a book as a starting point, create your own song or rap. How will you decide which part of the poem will be the chorus? How will you express the mood and emotion of the poem or the character through the music?

## **Cross curricular development ideas**

Perfect for PHSE work on school values, such as responsibility and resilience.

Sing and look at the lyrics as a starting point for discussion on issues such as making choices; facing challenges; dealing with hard times, difficult events; managing changes in our lives and making mistakes and what we can learn from them.

For older singers, consider the metaphor of the title *Unfinished Story* and think about the various chapters in our lives. Ask the children to consider their lives and how they might divide it into chapters.

Create cartoon strips about life events so far.

For younger singers, relate the song to work on *Me and Myself* and think about what makes us special, what makes us unique.

The song also features lyrics about other people in our lives and the impact they have on us. Can the children think of people who are important in their lives and have had a role in supporting, helping, and even challenging them?

For younger children, consider the role of family and friends and other people around us who help us such as our teachers.

Discuss books the children may have read about the lives of others? For younger children think about *Elmer* learning to embrace his uniqueness, by David McKee, or the antics of *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* by Jeff Kinney. For older singers consider *The Diary of Anne Frank*, Gerald Durrell's *My Family and other animals*, Malala Yousafzai's *I am Malala*, *Tales of childhood* by Roald Dahl or *Shackleton's Journey*.