

Songs for Voices and Classroom Instruments

Sydney the Camel *Trevor Davies*

Music Works



Key words are in bold

This song has been a great success with pupils of all ages as they readily get caught up in the atmosphere it creates.

It goes well on the first attempt because it is based on the echo principle (like “This Old Hammer”).

Once learned it can be sung by two groups in **canon**.

Although not shown here, an additional canon could be added on the half bar.

It is in the **E mode**¹ (based on the first five notes). The distinctive feature of this mode is the semitone step between the first and second notes (E – F). Watch out for the tendency to ‘normalise’ the opening phrases by singing F#.

The instrumental chorus is easy to learn, using only three notes.

First, teach the **rhythm pattern** as a movement exercise:

For example using table taps and handclaps.

Then vocalise the rhythm as “Du” and “Dah”

Write the rhythm on the board in **notation** with **pitch** names and sing the melody.

A thought: pitch is what to play: rhythm is when to play it!

Bar 1				Bar 2				Bar 3				Bar 4			
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Tap	tap	clap	_____	Tap	tap	clap	_____	Tap	tap	clap	clap	Tap	tap	clap	_____
Du	du	dah	_____	Du	du	dah	_____	Du	du	du	du	Du	du	dah	_____
E	E	E	_____	G	G	G	_____	F	F	F	F	E	E	E	_____

¹ A mode is a scale which uses only natural notes. Each mode has a different character according to the place at which the semitone steps occur. (E-F and B-C)

There is usually a tendency to speed up in the third bar. This can be counteracted by playing very quietly.

Discuss the **structure** of this pattern (AABA)

Discuss the **melodic structure** (ABCA)

Vocal performance

The opening phrase, which turns around the note E, has a lovely haunting feel that immediately captures the imagination of the pupils. You will find they readily sing it back as they 'get the message'. Without thinking they move from being an audience to being participants.

Explore the emotions, even if it is 'tongue in cheek'.

Dynamics are very important as is the languid tempo. Avoid a medium tempo but keep to the deliberately slow 'camel walking across the desert' tempo!

The instrumental chorus comes from "Colourtunes"

"Colourtunes" enables pupils to perform and compose using colour notation
available on CD ROM

A free introductory pack is available from Music Works

info@themusicworks.biz

Music Works

Making the music work in over a thousand schools

Trevor Davies writes music which aims to get everyone involved.

If you like this song, let us know!

Email Music Works on info@themusicworks.biz for details of more resources.

Trevor also runs song-writing workshops and can even devise
a whole opera with your pupils!