SECONDARY SCHOOLS TEACHER'S RESOURCE PACK

The Sixteen
HARRY CHRISTOPHERS



How Beautiful are the Feet – G. F. Handel, arranged by Will Todd



MEET THE COMPOSER

George Frideric Handel was born in Germany in 1685 and became one of the most famous composers of the Baroque period. He moved to England as a young man and wrote music for kings, queens and large audiences in London.

Handel composed operas, orchestral music and choral works, but he is best known for his famous oratorio Messiah. First performed in 1742, Messiah tells the story of hope, peace and celebration through music. It includes the world-famous 'Hallelujah Chorus', which is still performed by choirs all over the world today.

Handel's music is full of energy, drama and beautiful melodies, and nearly 300 years later people are still enjoying and performing his work. One of the reasons Messiah remains so popular today is its message of hope, peace and bringing people together through music.

Will Todd (b.1970) grew up in County Durham, North East England where his grandfather was a coal miner and his parents were teachers. His early musical development was with the Durham County Music Service and St Oswald's Choir in Durham and in 1981 he was awarded a music scholarship to study at Durham School.

Will's love of improvising has been the central force in a wide-ranging career of composing and playing. Will has worked with many of the UK's leading music organisations including The Royal Ballet and Opera, Welsh National Opera, Opera North, The Hallé Orchestra, Opera Holland Park, The Sixteen, Tenebrae, The BBC Singers and the BBC Concert Orchestra. He has also visited many countries performing and directing his music as well as working all over the UK with professional and amateur choirs as well as youth singers.

'How Beautiful Are The Feet' is a solo soprano aria in Handel's Messiah and Will Todd has arranged it for 4 part choir. Will has also taken inspiration from the aria to write a new song 'Let Me Walk In Peace' which takes musical elements of the original, with updated lyrics to have a universal and diverse message in keeping with more modern traditions.

INSTRUCTIONS

We have provided you with everything that you will need to teach this song to your class or choir.

RESOURCE BANK

- Performance Video (4 part version)
- Warm-Up Video
- Audio Tracks
  - Full Audio
  - Soprano Audio
  - Alto Audio
  - Tenor Audio
  - Bass Audio
  - Piano Accompaniment Audio.
- Animated Score Video
- Sheet Music



STEP 1

Watch the **Performance Video** of The Sixteen singing this song, so that your pupils can get used to what the music sounds like.

STEP 2

Join in with the **Warm-Up Video** to get your bodies and voices ready for singing.

STEP 3

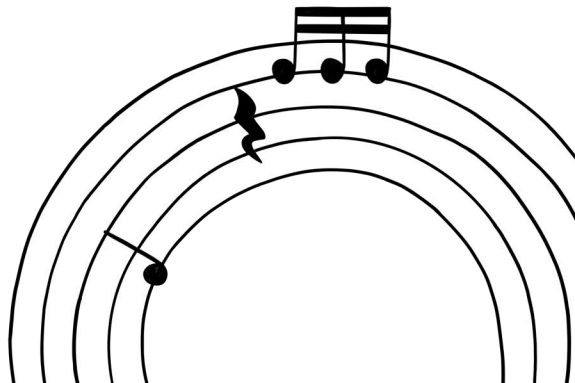
Learn the song using the **Single Part Audio Tracks** for each of the four parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass) where each part is more dominant but you can still hear the other parts. The **Sheet Music** can be downloaded below.

STEP 4

Practise the song by singing along with the **Full Audio Track** or the **Animated Score Video**.

STEP 5

Perform the song using the **Piano Accompaniment Track**.



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Once you have learned the song, here are some ideas to expand your learning into other areas of the music curriculum.



LISTENING

EXERCISE 1

Listen to the soprano aria 'How Beautiful are the Feet' from Handel's Messiah written in 1741.

How Beautiful are the Feet YouTube Link

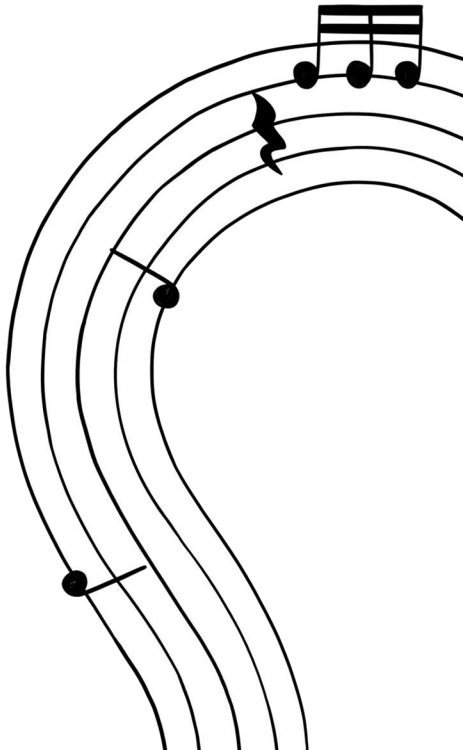
Compare and contrast this with the choral version.

Suggested questions:

- How does the message change when sung by a choir rather than an individual?
- Which version sounds more powerful? Why?
- Which version sounds more personal? Why?
- How does the texture change between the two versions?
- What new musical opportunities does a choir have that a solo singer does not?
- Which version do you think communicates the text most effectively?

EXERCISE 2

Many composers have written songs about peace. Listen to **Imagine** by John Lennon (written in 1963), discuss the music and the lyrics. What might have been happening at the time that inspired artists to write songs about peace? You may wish to expand this to include **Blowin' in the Wind** by Bob Dylan and **One Love** by Bob Marley.



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES continued

SINGING

Explore the resources for **Let Me Walk In Peace** by Will Todd on the Secondary homepage. This is a great companion song and you can explore the similarities and musical quotations taken from How Beautiful Are The Feet.

For songs about peace in a different genre, you could learn to sing **Imagine – John Lennon**, **Count on Me – Bruno Mars**, or **Three Little Birds – Bob Marley**, focusing on getting the message of each song across in your performance.

Each song approaches peace differently:

Three Little Birds – inner peace and feeling calm
Count on Me - peace in friendships and everyday actions
Imagine – a peaceful world

YouTube Karaoke Links

Imagine – John Lennon
Count on Me – Bruno Mars
Three Little Birds – Bob Marley



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES continued



COMPOSING

EXERCISE 1 - SOUNDSCAPE

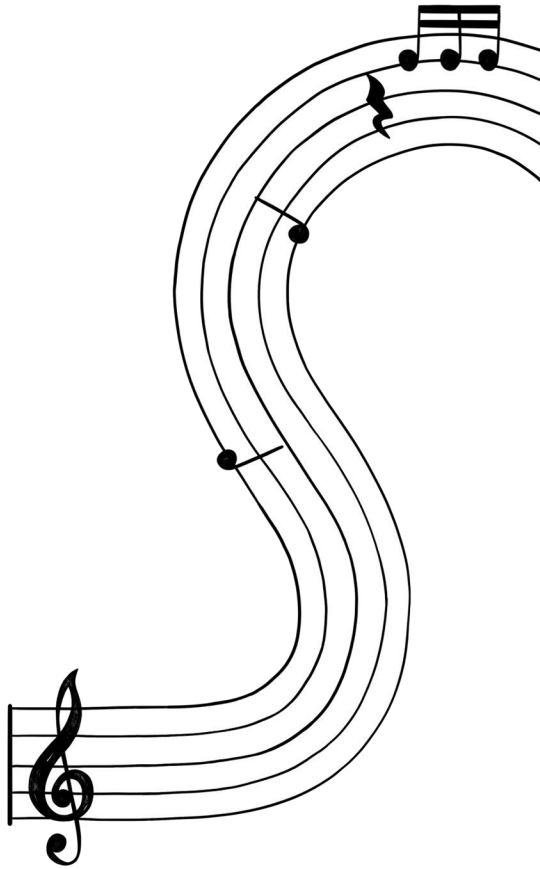
With younger pupils, create a free-form soundscape about peace, choosing appropriate vocal and instrumental sounds to create a calm atmosphere, and discussing the appropriate use of the inter-related dimensions of music such as dynamics (volume) and tempo (speed). You could create a contrasting piece for a different concept such as 'Joy' or 'Anger.'

Preparation:
Question. What does 'peaceful' sound like?
Question. What peaceful sounds do we have in nature?

Encourage pupils to suggest sounds using voice or body. Examples: humming, birdsong, breath sounds, happy sighing 'ah', heart-beat tap chest 'da-dum', finger-tip clapping like gentle rain.

Suggestions for making instruments:

- Scrunched paper slowly (rustling leaves, gentle breeze)
- Plastic bottles with rice (gentle rain)
- Spoons or keys (distant chimes)
- Fabric swished through air (gentle wind)
- Water bottle half full (gentle flowing water).



EXTENSION ACTIVITIES continued



Soundscape:

1 Choose 6 sounds and assign to small groups

2 Start with 3 breaths altogether breathing in through the nose and out to a gentle ‘ssshhhhh’ sound.

3 Point to group 1 to start, then group 2, gradually adding all the groups in.

Control the volume by raising your hands up to get a little louder and down to get quieter.

Point to each group in turn to stop their sound.

End with 3 breaths altogether breathing in through the nose and out to a gentle ‘ssshhhhh’ sound.

Close your eyes and keep breathing slowly. See if you can hold the silence for a couple of seconds.

Reflect: Which sounds helped you feel calm and safe? What part of the soundscape helped everyone work together? What can we do in school to make our classroom feel more peaceful?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES continued



EXERCISE 2 - SONGWRITING

Older pupils might like to create their own song for peace, writing both the lyrics and the music with support from the teacher. Start by brainstorming vocabulary associated with peace, it can help to find the opposite of each word e.g. calm / stormy, gentle / rough. Decide on a structure for your lyrics: how many lines will be in each verse, and which lines will rhyme, then use your vocabulary to construct each line. Using voices, instruments, or music software, depending on your pupils' confidence levels and the resources available, try out ideas for melodies that your lyrics could be sung to, and then add an accompaniment.

A further option is to take a well know song like 'Count on Me' by Bruno Mars.

Read the original lyrics to get a feel for the rhythm of each line:

Count on Me – *Bruno Mars (original lyrics)*

If you ever find yourself stuck in the middle of the sea
I'll sail the world to find you
If you ever find yourself lost in the dark and you can't see
I'll be the light to guide you.

We find out what we're made of
When we are called to help our friends in need.

You can count on me like one, two, three, I'll be there
And I know when I need it
I can count on you like four, three, two and you'll be there
'Cause that's what friends are supposed to do, oh, yeah.

Explore how your own lyrics might fit the music.

Sing along with the karaoke version of the song.

Count on Me karaoke YouTube link