

# ➤ LET'S SING

Target Group: **Year 2**

Australian Curriculum Reference: **Music**

- + Sing and play instruments to improvise, practise a repertoire of chants, songs and rhymes, including songs used by cultural groups in the community (ACAMUM081).

## LESSON SUMMARY

Students will develop an understanding of the needs of the elderly and the role of volunteers in aged care facilities. They will learn a minimum of two songs which they can perform in their role as volunteers.

## LESSON CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY

### Preliminary activity

- + Teacher contacts local aged care facility and arranges for the children to visit the site to entertain the residents. Teacher asks the aged care manager to assign a resident to a group of three children who will talk to them after the performance.

### In-class activities

- + Read *Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox.
- + Discuss aged care facilities and the people who live, work and volunteer in the facilities.
- + Discuss how people in the music industry often volunteer their time to entertain people and look at the following video clips.
  - + *Mark Wills Plays for Musicians On Call*: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPOh2-LxD3I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPOh2-LxD3I)
  - + *Taylor Goldsmith from Dawes shares his Musicians On Call experience*: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=506YdASi\\_1w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=506YdASi_1w)
- + Teacher tells the children that they will be like the volunteers in Musicians on Call, because they will be preparing two songs to perform at the local aged care facility. They will call their volunteer program Entertainers for the Elderly.
- + Teacher and children decide on a minimum of two suitable songs to sing, including one that has simple percussion.
- + Children practise these songs over a number of weeks so that they are ready to perform in public. Students also prepare questions that they will ask the residents when they visit.
- + Students visit the aged care facility and perform their songs. They are then assigned an individual resident to talk to for up to 10 minutes in groups of three. In particular, they will talk to the elderly people about whether they enjoyed the performance and what sort of musical memories the resident has, for example what their favourite songs are.

*Note: if there is any difficulty transporting the students to the aged care facility, residents could be invited to the school for an outing and be entertained there instead.*

- + If more activities are needed for the visit, students can take:
  - + guided reading books to read to the residents
  - + an item which has a special memory attached to it, and discuss it with one of the residents
  - + a drawing or painting to give to the resident.
- + Students could also do a painting that represents their experience and send it to the residents after the performance.

## Conclusion

After the visit students talk about:

- + how they felt as 'entertainers for the elderly'
- + what the residents told them during the conversations after the performance.

## ASSESSMENT

Anecdotal and observational assessment made by the teacher. The teacher can video the performance and the extra activities (if they are done). Students can discuss the reactions of the residents and the benefits each student received as a result of their volunteer work.

## RESOURCES

- + *Wilfred Gordon McDonald Partridge* by Mem Fox (digital version is available at Storyline Online: [www.storylineonline.net](http://www.storylineonline.net))
- + *Musicians on Call*:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPOh2-LxD3I](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPOh2-LxD3I) and [www.youtube.com/watch?v=506YdASi\\_1w](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=506YdASi_1w)
- + Teacher resource: *Music program unites generations*

## TEACHER RESOURCE

### Music program unites generations

If there was ever any doubt of music's ability to profoundly change lives, an inspirational pilot program between Kempsey West Public School and the Booroongen Djugan Aged Care Facility would silence that for good.

Sing Out Loud Together has not only created special bonds between the students and residents, it has also reaped cross-curricular benefits for students.

#### Celebrating different generations

The program celebrated young and old and brought together people from different generations to learn about each other through music.

An initiative of the Arts Health Institute (AHI), Sing Out Loud Together paired two students with an Elder 'buddy' from Booroongen, an Aboriginal nursing home. One day a week for eight weeks, Years 5 and 6 students from Kempsey West Public School travelled to the aged care facility to sing with the residents.

Each Tuesday the students met with their buddy, learned songs (such as Yellow Submarine, You are My Sunshine and The Happy Wanderer), the history of the music and also about the Elders' lives. In doing so students and Elders were transformed.

"There was wonderful respect between the children and the Elders," said AHI boss Dr Maggie Haertsch.

"Some of the Elders were lonely and not mixing so they would be really excited on Tuesday mornings when the children came.

#### Singing and sharing

"It was structured around singing but there were lots of questions about life history. There was a beautiful respect...you can't learn empathy and compassion, yet spending time with their buddies brought this out in the students."

At the final concert at the school, students presented their project about their buddies and the era they grew up in. The children also hosted the Elders at their school at the end of the program.

Kempsey West Public School principal Lyn Dockrill said not only had the pilot developed the social skills of the students, literacy underpinned the whole program.

"All students reflected on their visits to the aged care facility both in discussion and in written form," she said.

The students were equally impressed with the program.

#### Pilot a success

"Sing Out Loud taught me that it is cool to help older people," said student Kyrine Ennis while Jasmin Jones said "It was an exciting experience. It taught me to appreciate the elderly."

Dr Haertsch said the Elders gained enormous benefit from the experience.

“We saw a really huge change in the Elders...one woman who was very shy (and rarely spoke) gave a speech about the experience,” said Dr Haertsch.

The pilot had been such a success, a second eight-week program was under way at Kempsey West and AHI intended to extend the program nationally.

“The new students are so excited to have a chance to meet the residents of Booroongen, as they have heard from the other students how great it was,” said Natalie Mealing, the teacher coordinating the program at Kempsey West.

*By Kellie Trees, NSW Government Department of Education and Communities, published Monday, 16 July 2012.*

*(From: [www.artshealthinstitute.org.au/News/Media/Music-program-unites-generations.aspx](http://www.artshealthinstitute.org.au/News/Media/Music-program-unites-generations.aspx))*