

# FAMILY TREE

A CHILDREN'S MUSICAL ABOUT LOVE AND THE FAMILY  
BY ELLEN WOODS BRYCE

Orchestrations by John DeVries\*

PERFORMANCE TIME: APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES

\*Based on original orchestrations by David Danner

#### AVAILABLE PRODUCTS:

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**Jubilate**  
MUSIC

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# FAMILY TREE

## CAST

### GRAM

Mrs. McKee, grandmother to Kate and Sammie. “Gram” (as Kate and Sammie call her) is the librarian at Central Christian School and about 55-65 years old. The part can also be played by a younger adult made up to look older.

### KATE and SAMMIE

Older sister and younger sister. Basically, they like each other but sometimes Sammie gets in Kate’s way. They attend Central Christian School and often like hanging out with Gram in the library after school.

### OLIVIA

Kate’s best friend at school. Olivia is the brainy type, wears rimmed glasses, and uses big words. Her parents are divorced.

### KJ and ZACH

Kate’s soccer playing boy buddies from school. KJ is adopted.

## SET

The Central Christian School Library can be created as simply as or elaborately as your time and resources allow: only a few tables and chairs or theatre flats, etc. A small desk for Gram can be placed Stage Left with a chair for her behind it. On the front of her desk is a sign (large enough for the audience to see) that reads “Librarian.” In the center area can be a small table with three small chairs around it (for Kate, Sammie, and Olivia). This is where much of the dialog will be delivered by the children as they sit and stand as blocked. A few extra chairs should be placed Stage Right for KJ and Zach. To fully create the atmosphere of a library, consider placing a few standing bookshelves with faux book fronts lining the shelves (made of cardboard and painted). Or create 4’ x 8’ flats (do an Internet search for “building theatre flats” for complete instructions) and paint bookshelves with books on them. Place the flats to the right and left of the choir, or behind the choir if your choir risers fill the entire playing area. Put a box on a table that reads “Book Return.” Place a box of facial tissues on a table for Kate’s clean-up efforts. Other options include hanging a colorful banner above the choir or sign on a stand downstage left or right that reads “CCS Library” and a sign on the other side of the stage that reads “Quiet Zone.” If desired, add a few small plants around the set to add color and visual interest. (NOTE: Stage Right and Stage Left are to the actor’s right and left when facing the audience.)

## STAGING

The drama should occupy center stage, in front of the choir. When Gram is interviewed, the children can angle or move their chairs slightly closer to her desk and Zach places the cell phone on her desk to “record” her comments. Gram shouldn’t be stuck behind the desk during the entire musical, of course. So, the director should look for logical places in the musical for her to stand, sit, and move when appropriate. Of course, this goes for all the actors as a natural part of the blocking process.

For “Nobody’s Listening to Me,” Sammie can sing this song downstage right away from the group as she is reflecting privately on her situation. The other actors quietly and unobtrusively work on the family tree chart. If a different singer is used to sing this solo, Sammie can sit downstage quietly alone and reflect as she opens a book to read, looking up periodically. Ideally, Sammie will sing the solo.

For “By the Way, I Love You,” when Sammie gets upset, prior to the song, she exits. During the introduction to the song, she re-enters dejectedly and sits by herself downstage right. When Kate sees Sammie enter during the song introduction, she gently approaches her and begins singing. If you choose to use a soloist for this song different from the actor who plays Kate, Kate can pantomime quietly speaking lovingly and apologetically to Sammie as the song unfolds (ideally, however, the solo will be sung by Kate). During the interlude (measures 19-21), Kate walks over to the art supplies and picks up a piece of paper and a few colored markers and gives them to Sammie as if to say, “I want you to participate in creating something with me again.” Sammie smiles and gladly accepts. They hug at the end of the song.

## COSTUMES

No special costumes are required for the actors; just regular school clothing that reflects their respective characters. The choir can wear brightly colored matching tee-shirts and jeans.

## PROPS

Laptop for Gram; schoolbooks for Kate and Olivia; water bottle for Kate (with no actual water in it); books and cell phone for Zach; soccer ball for KJ; papers, pencils & art supplies for Sammie.

(During the Overture, GRAM sits at her table working on her laptop with stacks of books and papers surrounding her workspace. Choir children wander through the library in small groups on their way to the choir risers – individuals may drop books off at a BOOK RETURN box or take a moment to quietly say “hi” to GRAM as she offers friendly smiles to each one...maybe gesturing for them to be quiet in the library.)

# FAMILY TREE

## Overture

Music by  
ELLEN WOODS BRYCE

With spirit (♩ = ca. 92-100)

1 25

ACCOMP.

l.h. *f*

*lightly*

*simile*

7 *bring out melody*

13 **16** *light staccato*

19

25 **27**

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(JMG1238)

31

legato

mf

Detailed description: This system contains measures 31 through 36. The right hand features a flowing, legato melody with eighth-note patterns. The left hand provides a steady accompaniment with eighth notes. A dynamic marking of *mf* is present in the final measure.

37

ten. **40** (♩ = ca. 66-72)

bring out melody

lightly

ten.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 37 through 42. Measure 40 is marked with a box containing the number 40 and a tempo instruction (♩ = ca. 66-72). The right hand melody is marked *lightly* and *bring out melody*. The left hand accompaniment is marked *ten.*

43

more legato

Detailed description: This system contains measures 43 through 47. The right hand melody is marked *more legato*. The left hand accompaniment continues with eighth-note patterns.

48

r.h.  
l.h.

r.h.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 48 through 52. Measures 49-52 feature a complex texture with multiple voices in both hands, including some sixteenth-note passages. The right hand is labeled *r.h.* and the left hand *l.h.*.

53

Detailed description: This system contains measures 53 through 57. The right hand melody continues with eighth-note patterns, and the left hand accompaniment remains consistent.

58

**59** (♩ = ca. 66-72)

rit.

bring out melody

Detailed description: This system contains measures 58 through 63. Measure 59 is marked with a box containing the number 59 and a tempo instruction (♩ = ca. 66-72). The right hand melody is marked *bring out melody*. The left hand accompaniment is marked *rit.* and features a change to 4/4 time signature.

# FAMILY TREE

(Singer's Page 33)

Words and Music by  
ELLEN WOODS BRYCE

With spirit (♩ = ca. 84-92)

ACCOMP.

2/26

*f*

*mp*  
*lightly*

5 ALL

*mp*

1. Take all the peo - ple who be -  
2. Take all your fam - 'ly mem - bers.

*simile*

*bring out melody*

10

long to your fam - i - ly. Put 'em all to - geth - er and what have you got? A  
(I'm speak - ing "rel - a - tive" - ly).

14

16

great big fam - i - ly tree!

Twen - ty - sev - en un - cles, twen - ty - sev - en aunts, and a  
Add up all the in - laws, (e - ven all the out - laws!)

*light staccato*

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(JMG1238)

# WHAT WAS IT LIKE?

(Singer's Page 35)

Words and Music by  
ELLEN WOODS BRYCE

3/27 Lightly, in two (♩ = ca. 63-69) *mf*

ALL Tell me please, what was it like to be

ACCOMP. *mf*

5 young when you were young? 8

1. What was it like to  
2. Do you re-mem - ber

*dolce*

9 live back then? I real - ly want to know.

how you felt?

r.h.  
l.h.

r.h.

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(JMG1238)

14

Tell me please, what was it like to be young when you were young? Oh,

18

4	5
28	29

was was it like liv - ing long a - go?

22

1. How did you sur - vive with one T. V. and on - ly one ra - di - o?  
 2. Did you real - ly grow up on a farm? Did you walk ten miles in the snow? Did you

26

How did you have fun when you could - n't e - ven stream a vid - e - o?  
 ev - er milk a cow at four a. m.? I'd like to know!





# HURRY! SCURRY!

(Singer's Page 36)

Words and Music by  
ELLEN WOODS BRYCE

6/30 (♩ = ca. 76-84) *mf* with panic

ALL

ACCOMP. *mf*

Hur-ry!— Scur-ry!— Both-er and wor-ry, I've

5 got to get to school on time!— Can't stop! Got-ta watch the clock, I'll

10 nev-er get to school on time!—

13

1. Gob-ble up my break-fast, then— get— dressed.
2. Hur-ry out the door and hur-ry to the bus,

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(JMG1238)

15

Try to find my books, there's nev - er an - y rest. I'll nev - er get to school on  
 hur - ry ev - 'ry - where, I'm al - ways in a rush. I nev - er seem to be on

19

time! \_\_\_\_\_ Is there a place where  
 time! \_\_\_\_\_ Wish I could take some

*23 wistfully*

*molto legato*

25

time is slow? Tell me where, and I think I'll go;  
 time one day; spend that time in a la - zy way;

31

Some - place where I can sit and see who I am... who I'll  
 dream - ing a dream that just won't wait, but I can't dream it

# NOBODY'S LISTENING TO ME

(Singer's Page 38)

Words and Music by  
ELLEN WOODS BRYCE

10/34 In a slow one (♩ = ca. 112-120)

ALL *p*  
Lis - ten!

ACCOMP. *mp*

7  
Don't turn a - way! I know I'm young, but I have a lot to

13  
say. \_\_\_\_\_

SAMMIE 17 *mp*

1. Why should I talk when there's
2. No - bod - y's lis - t'ning. I

19  
no - bod - y there? No one to lis - ten, no one to care,  
might as well be per - fect - ly si - lent, still as can be.

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(JMG1238)

25

I'd like to talk but there's real - ly no need. No - bod - y's lis - t'ning to

11/35

31

me! Ev - 'ry - one's learn - ing to say what they feel,

ALL *mp*

37

learn - ing to let out their fears; but no - bod - y's learn - ing to

12/36

43

lis - ten. No - bod - y's us - ing their ears!

# YOU GOTTA RAISE YOUR PARENTS UP RIGHT

(Singer's Page 40)

Words and Music by  
ELLEN WOODS BRYCE

14/38 (♩ = ca. 72)

GRAM

ACCOMP.

*mf*

*p*

1. It's

3

hard to be a kid these days, 'cause par-ents have a lot to learn! What  
 you o - bey, do what they say, they'll grow up more and more. They'll

5

pa-tience it takes when they make mis-takes. Oh, you got-ta see that grown-ups grow up right. You  
 re - al - ize that you've ver - y wise.

7

got - ta raise your par - ents up right!

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9 ALL *p* 10

Well, it takes a lot of love, and it takes a lot of time; but

11 *rit.* Slowly

some - day you'll feel proud, when you say with a smile, "Well, it took quite a while! \_\_\_\_\_

13 *a tempo*

\_\_\_\_\_ But I fi - nal - ly raised them right." \_\_\_\_\_ You

15 / 39

15 1 *GRAM* *p*

got - ta raise your par - ents up right! 2. If

**GRAM:** I think Sammie's really upset.

**KATE:** Well, she should be! She ruined my chart, see?

(KATE holds up the chart. GRAM keeps on working)

**GRAM:** Yes, I see.

**KATE:** (*defensively*) She's so clumsy! And she's always hanging around, asking questions and getting in the way. (*looking to GRAM for her response*) It took me. . . almost an hour – at least thirty minutes to draw it. (*pauses*) She wanted to get snacks for me and my friends. (*thoughtfully*) I think I'll go talk to her.

(GRAM smiles as KATE joins the re-entering SAMMIE downstage right – see "Staging" p. 3)

## BY THE WAY, I LOVE YOU

(Singer's Page 41)

Words and Music by  
ELLEN WOODS BRYCE

16/40 Gently (♩ = ca. 58-66) *mp*

KATE

We can hurt with the

bring out mel.

ACCOMP. *mp*

4

words we say. Words can hurt in an aw - ful way.

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(JMG1238)

# I KNOW A SOMEONE

(Singer's Page 44)

Words and Music by  
ELLEN WOODS BRYCE

18/42 Gently (♩ = ca. 100-108)

ACCOMP. *mp* *legato*

6 ALL *mp*

May - be your fam - i - ly's  
Some - times we don't un - der -

11

small. \_\_\_\_\_ May - be you feel like you don't have a fam - 'ly at  
stand. \_\_\_\_\_ Some - times our lives just don't turn out the way that we've

17 *mp* 21

all. \_\_\_\_\_ May - be you're ask - ing some  
planned. \_\_\_\_\_ Some - times we keep ask - ing,

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(JMG1238)



# FAMILY TREE

(Reprise)

(Singer's Page 46)

Words and Music by  
ELLEN WOODS BRYCE

With spirit (♩ = ca. 84-92)

ACCOMP. 22/46

5 ALL 8 *mp*

Take all the peo - ple who be -

10

long to God's fam - i - ly. Put 'em all to - geth - er and what have you got? A

14 16

great big fam - i - ly tree! Not a sin - gle un - cle, not a sin - gle aunt, you will

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