

TEACHING TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS

By Susan Eernisse

Are You Good and Are You Strong? poses some difficult questions set against a lovely gentle melody. Sometimes adults forget that children want answers just as much as they do. In this anthem, as in life, God doesn't answer the questions but leads the singers to see they must trust in God's gentle care. For people of all ages, God knows that is just what we need. Here are some teaching tips and rehearsal suggestions to get you started.

MELODY PATTERNS

The opening melodic line is rhythmically quite simple and provides a great opportunity for some beautiful singing! Introduce the melody by echo-singing solfege syllables, pitch numbers or a neutral syllable in two-measure phrases.

Pattern 1. do re mi sol fa re mi (meas. 5-6)

Pattern 2. re mi fa la sol re mi (meas. 7-8)

Pattern 3. mi sol do' ti la sol la (meas. 9-10)

Pattern 4. sol mi la sol sol mi sol (meas. 12-13)

Repeat these patterns until children are secure with the opening melody, then add the text.

TEACHING TIP

When echo-singing, always allow the children to sing the echo without you so that you can check for accuracy. You can support their voices by playing the melody lightly on the piano or on a glockenspiel or other pitched percussion instrument.

STUDENT ACTIVITY PAGE

Copy the page for each singer. Have them fold the page in half to use either the syllables or numbers as you instruct them. Singers can use this as a visual support when singing the melody patterns above.

SINGING IN HARMONY

If you want to challenge your more experienced singers, assign a few of them to the descant. Have an adult helper pull them aside to work on the descant for a few minutes each week or ask them to come a few minutes early so that you can work with them before choir. You can teach the descant by isolating the melody patterns as you did with the opening melody. Be sure to have them sing with a light and open head voice.

Pattern 1. do' ti la sol

Pattern 2. re' do' ti re' do'

Pattern 3. do' ti la ti do' ti do'

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

The questions in the lyrics are some good talking points for discussion. Support children who may be struggling with these kinds of questions by modeling a caring, non-judgmental attitude. Sometimes children need to know that adults don't have all the answers – and that is ok.

ARE YOU GOOD AND ARE YOU STRONG?

Honest Questions for our Creator

for unison or opt. 2-part voices and keyboard*

Words by
JANN ALDREDGE-CLANTON

Music by LARRY E. SCHULTZ
and JANN ALDREDGE-CLANTON

○ 1/6

With a gentle rocking motion (♩ = 96)

KEYBOARD

5 UNISON VOICES

mp

Are you good and are you strong? Is it true you
Why don't you stop all the pain, calm the fear and

8

do no wrong? For some an - swers our hearts long.
ease the strain?

*An accompaniment/performance CD, No.30509, is available separately .

11 12 *mp*

We, your chil - dren, sing this song.
 *Like a child we sing this song.

mp

14 2/7 (repeat cue) 3/8

17 18 *mf*

Are you there and do you care?

mf

20

Can we find you ev - 'ry - where? Can you help us

*Alternate text if sung by youth and/or adults

4/9

23

rit.

when we fall? _____ Do you hear us when we call? _____

rit.

27 DESCANT (opt.)

mf a tempo

Do you love us? Will you

MELODY

f

Do you love us come what may? Will you with us

mf a tempo

30 5/10

rit.

al - ways stay? Keep us safe - ly from all harm;

al - ways stay? Keep us safe - ly from all harm;

rit.

34 *a tempo*
sub. mp

Rock us gent - ly in your arms.

a tempo
sub. mp

This system contains measures 34, 35, and 36. The vocal line starts with the lyrics 'Rock us gently in your arms.' and ends with a long horizontal line indicating a sustained note. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand and a more melodic line in the right hand.

37

rit.

Rock us gent - ly in your

rit.

This system contains measures 37, 38, and 39. The tempo is marked *rit.* (ritardando). The vocal line continues with the lyrics 'Rock us gently in your'. The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern, with a slight deceleration indicated by the *rit.* marking.

40

molto rit.

arms.

molto rit.

This system contains measures 40, 41, and 42. The tempo is marked *molto rit.* (molto ritardando). The vocal line concludes with the word 'arms.' and a long horizontal line. The piano accompaniment features a final melodic flourish in the right hand and a steady bass line in the left hand, ending with a fermata over the final chord.