

TEACHING TIPS AND SUGGESTIONS

By Susan Eernisse

In **Simply Amazing Grace** Jill Gallina has created a solid arrangement combining 2 beloved songs – “Amazing Grace” and “Simple Gifts.” These partner songs mesh to create a wonderful part-singing experience for young singers. Here are some tips and suggestions that will help your choir sing beautifully and get the most out of the anthem.

HYMNODY

“Amazing Grace” is one of the most beloved hymns of all time. Even people who never attend church easily recognize the words and tune. Consider teaching the entire hymn to your students as part of a hymn memory project. If your church uses a specific hymnal, allow the children to sing from it. Have your children do a “hymn survey” of their family members, asking them the name of their favorite hymn. Collect all the responses and list them on posterboard. See how many times “Amazing Grace” appears in the responses.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

The idea of grace being a gift from God comes through strongly in this anthem. How about encouraging your singers to memorize some grace-themed scriptures? Suggested verses include Proverbs 3:34, Luke 2:40, John 1:14, Romans 16:20, 2 Corinthians 12:9, Ephesians 2:8-9, and Hebrews 4:16. Print these on cardstock to display around the rehearsal room.

STUDENT ACTIVITY PAGE

Print copies of the *Simply Amazing Grace* Student Activity Page on white cardstock for each singer. Students should cut apart the gift tags on the sheet. Remind them that grace is God’s gift of love to each of us. Allow them to select one of the verses listed above and print it on a gift tag. They can color the border of the gift tag, punch a hole in the end and thread a piece of ribbon or string through the hole.

Encourage the children to hang the gift tag where they will see it daily so they can memorize the scripture. Leave the extra gift tags out with pencils, crayons, hole punch and string for early arrivers in the coming weeks. As the children memorize a verse, they can begin memorizing additional verses. Allow children the opportunity to say their verses from memory to each other or to adult volunteers.

SINGING IN HARMONY

Simply Amazing Grace could be performed by younger singers as a unison anthem if necessary. Sing as written through measure 56. Sing only Part I from there to the end. This will eliminate all the harmony parts.

If you perform as written with the two parts, everyone will learn both the primary tunes plus the connecting material in measures 49-64 that leads into the partner song portion of the song. Make sure the children are confident with the two individual melodies before trying to combine them. Have a strong adult singer lead each of the two groups until the two parts can continue independently. In the beginning, have the two groups sing facing opposite directions (groups back-to-back) with their adult leader in front of them. Next, have both groups face the same direction (groups side-by-side). Finally have the two groups face each other. Remind the singers that it is not a competition, that both parts are equally important.

SIMPLY AMAZING GRACE

for 2-Part voices, accompanied

Arranged by
JILL GALLINA

Tune: NEW BRITAIN
Virginia Harmony, 1831
SIMPLE GIFTS
JOSEPH BRACKETT

With reverence (♩ = ca. 108-112)

ACCOMP.

mf *legato*

4 PART I, II *mf*

A -

9

maz - ing grace, how sweet the sound that

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13 *f*

saved a soul like me. I once was

18

lost, but now I'm found, was blind but now I

23

see.

mf legato

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28 *mp*

'Tis the

33

gift to be sim - ple, 'tis the gift to be free, 'tis the

mp

37 *mf*

gift to come down_ where I ought to be. When - ev - er I am

mf

42

tossed in the storms of the sea, I can rest in the arms of my

47

rall. PART I only *mf* 49 *a tempo*

Lord, lov - ing - ly. Your love has a - wak - ened me, shown me the

52

way. It's

PART II *mf*

You nev - er for - sake me or lead me a - stray! It's

57

cresc. poco a poco

You, Lord, I cling to; it's You, Lord, I sing to, and to You I

cresc. poco a poco

You, Lord, I cling to; it's You, Lord, I sing to, and to You I

cresc. poco a poco

62

*f**mf*

65

now hum - bly pray. A - maz - ing grace, how

f *mf*

now hum - bly pray. 'Tis the gift to be sim - ple, 'tis the

f *mf*

65

67

sweet the sound that saved a soul like me.

gift to be free, 'tis the gift to come down where I ought to

72 *f*

I once was lost, but now I'm found, was
be. When - ev - er I am tossed in the storms of the sea, I can

77 *mp* **81** *rit. poco a poco*

blind but now I see. God's sim - ply a -
rest in the arms of my Lord, lov - ing - ly. God's sim - ply a -

mp *rit. poco a poco*

81 *mp* *rit. poco a poco*

82 *opt. div.*

maz - ing grace!
maz - ing grace!