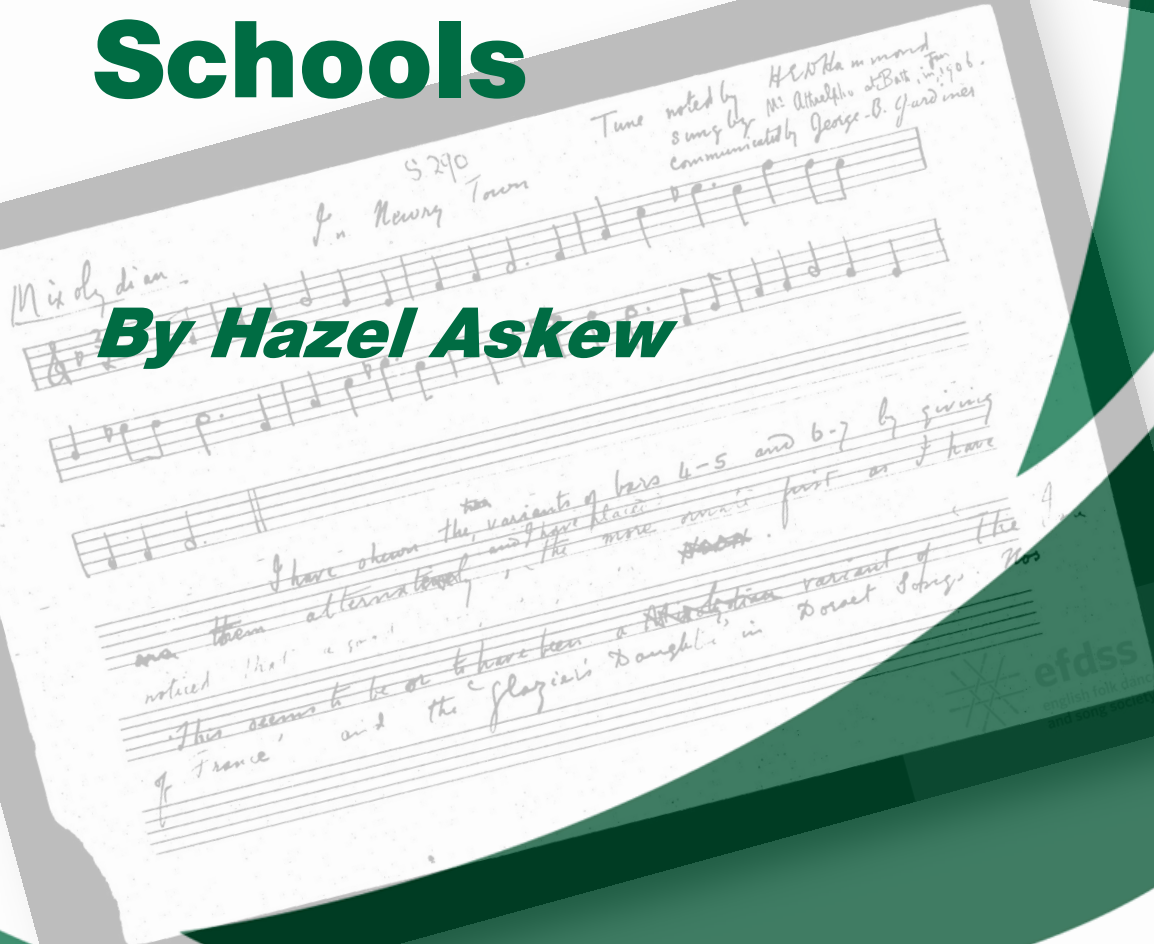


Using Folk Song in Secondary Schools



By Hazel Askew



The Full English

The Full English was a unique nationwide project unlocking hidden treasures of England's cultural heritage by making over 58,000 original source documents from 12 major folk collectors available to the world via a ground-breaking nationwide digital archive and learning project. The project was led by the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS), funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and in partnership with other cultural partners across England.

The Full English digital archive (www.vwml.org) continues to provide access to thousands of records detailing traditional folk songs, music, dances, customs and traditions that were collected from across the country. Some of these are known widely, others have lain dormant in notebooks and files within archives for decades.

The Full English learning programme worked across the country in 19 different schools including primary, secondary and special educational needs settings. It also worked with a range of cultural partners across England, organising community, family and adult learning events.

Supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund, the National Folk Music Fund and The Folklore Society.



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Additional Resources

Audio recordings of the three songs in the pack, sung by Hazel Askew, are available for free download from www.efdss.org/resourcebank

Introduction

The aim of this pack is to explore ways of introducing and using folk music at Key Stage 3 in secondary settings. This material is mostly based on The Full English project at Acland Burghley School, London, Spring 2014.

Key aspects of this project were:

- To give Year 7 an introduction to folk as part of music classes
- To use material from The Full English Archive
- To use material that has some kind of local relevance

Listening exercise

As a way of introducing folk music, rather than giving out definitions or strict ideas, we played some clips from a few contrasting tracks, which could all be described as folk music.

The aim of this is to:

- broaden ideas about what folk music can be
- to challenge preconceptions
- to use their listening skills
- create a group discussion about folk music
- expose them to music they may not have heard before and let them form their own opinions
- Not just present folk music as something historical, but show how it can be new songs as well as old etc

Key questions to discuss as a group and brainstorm:

- Is this folk music?
- How old do you think it is (the recording, and the song)
- What's it about?
- What instruments were used?
- What else did you notice?

Tracks we listened to:

- **Seth Lakeman** – Kitty Jay, written by Seth Lakeman, from the album Kitty Jay
- **Joseph Taylor** – Worcester City, traditional song, from Voice of the People vol. 3 – recorded in 1908
- **Eliza Carthy** – Worcester City, traditional song, from Anglicana, recorded in 2002
- **Chris Wood** – Hollow Point, written by Chris Wood, from Handmade Life, recorded 2010

Practical 1: Sea Shanty - Santianna

This is a song from The Full English archive that was collected in Marylebone, London.

We slightly simplified the tune to suit the groups we were working with (see page 5). We went straight into learning this song by ear:

Basic arrangements ideas

Some basic riffs/physical actions to work with the chorus of the song:

- “Heave her up” stamp, stamp, clap
- Stamp + clap “Away”

Extension

- Harmonies on refrain lines
- Rest on first beat of chorus

Once we’d learnt the chorus, we then had a discussion about the song, covering things like:

- What kind of song – sea shanty
- Where sung?
- Working song – needs to be rhythmic
- Needs to be oomphy!

Verses and song writing

We listened to an example verse of the song and discussed its structure, what was the same and different to the chorus, and what it was about.

When I was young and in my prime,

Away Santiana!

I went to sea and served my time,

All on the plains of Mexico!

Traditionally, shanties are not usually continuous narrative songs, and verses would have been added and made up on the spot by the seamen singing it.

Santa Anna (Chanty) / Santianna

Collected from Charles Robbins by Cecil Sharp, 31 March 1909, Marylebone, London
www.vwml.org/record/CJS2/10/2110

Roud Number: 297
Traditional

Original version from The Full English archive

O San - ty An - na gained the__ day O a - way O San - ty An - na O

San - ty An - na__ gained__ the__ day Or - dle on the__ plains of Mex - i__ co

Simplified version

And it's heave her up and away we go!
Away Santianna!
Heave her up and away we go
All on the plains of Mexico!

When I was young and in my prime
Away Santianna!
I went to sea and served my time,
All on the planis of Mexico

Before writing our own verses we had a class brainstorm about the kind of things you might want to sing about if you were on a ship, e.g.:

- Your surroundings
- What you missed from home
- Where you were going
- Things on board a ship
- What would you eat on a ship?
- Why might you be on a ship?

This opens up a wide variety of ideas for songwriting. We then split into smaller groups to have a go at writing a few verses. Once we had all the verses, we put it together as our own class sea shanty, with each group singing their verses and everyone joining in on the refrains and choruses.

Extension

With some of the classes, we made smaller group arrangements too, using arrangement cards with riffs and verses on. The cards had different colours and we had lots of copies of each, including blank ones for them to make up additional material. It created a really good visual representation of the arrangement and allowed them to make it their own:

E.g.:

“Heave her up!”
stamp, stamp clap

Stamp + clap
“Away!”

X2

Verse 1

Refrains with
harmonies



Sea Shanty Worksheet - Santianna

Collected on 31 March 1909 in Marylebone from a man called Charles Robbins

Sea shanty – a song which would have been sung on a ship to accompany work

Chorus:

And it's heave her up and away we go!
Away Santianna!
Heave her up and away we go,
All on the plains of Mexico!

Verse:

When I was young and in my prime,
Away Santianna!
I went to sea and served my time,
All on the plains of Mexico!

<i>When</i>	<i>I</i>	<i>was</i>	<i>young</i>	<i>and</i>	<i>in</i>	<i>my</i>	<i>prime</i>
<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>

<i>I</i>	<i>went</i>	<i>to</i>	<i>sea</i>	<i>and</i>	<i>served</i>	<i>my</i>	<i>time</i>
<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>

.....

Away Santianna!

.....

All on the plains of Mexico!

.....

Away Santianna!

.....

All on the plains of Mexico!

Practical 2: Narrative Folk Song - In Newry Town (The Wild and Wicked Youth)

This song was actually collected in Bath, but is a version of a song from London that is set in London, mentioning lots of places that are still well known today.

We slightly simplified this tune as well (see page 10 for score), to make it easier for a group to sing together.

Firstly we listened to the song, and discussed the story, the characters, their motives and the settings/places mentioned in the song.

As a class, we then learnt the last verse of the song by ear.

We discussed ways the story could be modernized and rewritten, before splitting into 4 smaller groups and rewriting the song using the worksheets below.

As this was a narrative song, there were many more skills needed for writing verses compared to the sea shanty: there were no refrains, there were certain aspects to narrative of each verse that had to be included, the students had to communicate with other groups to make sure the whole story worked and they also had to think about characters and motives etc.

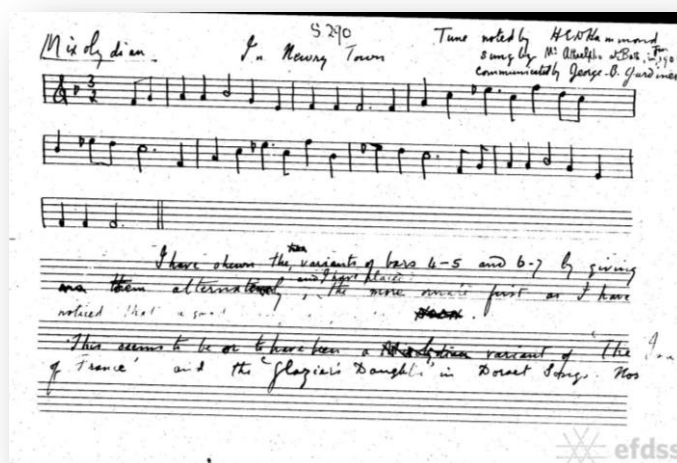


Photo: Original manuscript from The Full English digital archive

In Newry Town (The Wild and Wicked Youth)

Collected from Henry Atherlpho by Henry Hammond, January 1906, Bath, Somerset
www.vwml.org/record/HAM/3/12/14

Roud Number: 490
Traditional

Original version from The Full English archive

9 Simplified version

In London Town I was bred and born,
At Tyburn's ground I did die for scorn.
I signed myself to a saddling trade,
They often called me a roving blade.

At seventeen I took a wife,
I loved her dear as I loved my life.
To keep her happy both night and day,
A-robbing I went on the Kings Highway,

I robbed Lord Golding I do declare,
I robbed Lady Mansfield in Grosvenor Square.
Put the shutters up then wished them goodnight,
Carried home their silver to my heart's delight.

To Covent Garden I made my way,
All for my bride for to see the play,
But Fielding's gang there did me pursue,
And taken I was by their cursed crew.

And when I'm dead and gone to my grave,
A flashy funeral please let me have,
And when I'm gone they shall speak the truth,
"There goes a wild and a wicked youth."

Song rewriting worksheet 1

Narrative Song: In Newry Town (The Wild and Wicked Youth)

Original song collected in Bath in Jan 1906 from Henry Atherlpho

Original first verse:

In London Town I was bred and born
At Tyburn's ground I did die for scorn
I signed myself to a saddling trade
They often called me a roving blade

This verse opens the whole song, so needs to introduce the story. In this verse, the speaker must tell us about his background, where he's from, and what he did for a living.

This verse needs to be:

- In the first person eg. I, me, myself
- In the past tense eg. I was, I did, I went
- In rhyming couplets eg. lines 1 & 2 must rhyme, lines 3 & 4 must rhyme



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Song rewriting worksheet 2

Narrative Song: In Newry Town (The Wild and Wicked Youth)

Original song collected in Bath in Jan 1906 from Henry Atherlpho

Original second verse:

At seventeen I took a wife
I loved her dear as I loved my life
To keep her happy both night and day
A-robbing I went on the Kings Highway

In this verse, the speaker must tell us the reason why he turned to crime, and what crime he turned to.

This verse needs to be:

- In the first person eg. I, me, myself
- In the past tense eg. I was, I did, I went
- In rhyming couplets eg. lines 1 & 2 must rhyme, lines 3 & 4 must rhyme



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Song rewriting worksheet 3

Narrative Song: In Newry Town (The Wild and Wicked Youth)

Original song collected in Bath in Jan 1906 from Henry Atherlpho

Original third verse:

I robbed Lord Golding I do declare
I robbed Lady Mansfield in Grosvenor Square
Put the shutters up, then wished them goodnight
Carried home their silver to my heart's delight

In this verse, the speaker must talk about who the victims of his crimes were, what he gained from it, and how he felt about it.

This verse needs to be:

- In the first person eg. I, me, myself
- In the past tense eg. I was, I did, I went
- In rhyming couplets eg. lines 1 & 2 must rhyme, lines 3 & 4 must rhyme



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Song rewriting worksheet 4

Narrative Song: In Newry Town (The Wild and Wicked Youth)

Original song collected in Bath in Jan 1906 from Henry Atherlpho

Original fourth verse:

To Covent Garden I made my way
All for my bride for to see the play
But Fielding's gang there did me pursue
And taken I was by their cursed crew

In this verse, the speaker must tell us how he was caught and what he was doing at the time.

This verse needs to be:

- In the first person eg. I, me, myself
- In the past tense eg. I was, I did, I went
- In rhyming couplets eg. lines 1 & 2 must rhyme, lines 3 & 4 must rhyme



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We were then able to put together our own class version of this song, our own retelling of this story in the modern day.

Here's an example that one Year 7 class came up with:

I was born and raised in the Harlem Hood.
My father died, but his life was good.
The coffee shop was my working place,
But I lost my pay to a single ace.

I went to Vegas and gambled away.
Returned to London as skint as hay.
My only money was a pence of three,
I had no choice but to rob Jay-Z.

Robbed Alan Sugar I do declare,
Of whom I rob I just do not care.
I rob the people of all their stuff.
Even sheep, yes I robbed their fluff.

To Camden Town I made my way,
To rob a bank with some laser rays.
My fellow henchmen were all big flops,
So I was tazered by the cops.

Oh when I'm dead and gone to my grave,
A flashy funeral please let me have,
And when I'm gone they shall speak the
truth:

There goes a wild and a wicked youth.

Practical 3: Lullaby

This song was collected by Ralph Vaughan Williams on 17 August 1906 from Mr Thompson of Dunston, Northumberland:

This song makes a nice contrast to *Santianna* and it's really good for focusing on singing skills and quality of sound. It has a very different background and purpose to *Santianna*, and many students may well know other lullabies.

Aspects of the song to focus on

- **Singing well and quality of sound**

Making it sound gentle like a lullaby

- **Singing in harmony**

This song is a simple melody so has good potential for harmonies. You could make up a simple bass line and high harmony, which could be taught to a group of students.

Extension: Making our own harmonies

For a very able group who are used to singing in harmony, or have a good level of music theory, this song could be used to discuss and create harmonies as a group by ear.

Good ways to approach this:

- Starting with a drone is always a good way to start to think about harmonies. Try singing the song with a tonic drone all the way through, think about the effect it has, does it need to change note some points, does it clash too much. Experiment as a class. Could also try adding a harmony on the 5th as well.
- Could then try turning this into a bass line, a lower line that moves more than a drone, but is fairly solid and usually hovers around 1,4 and 5.
- Could then experiment with adding a higher line on top, starting a 3rd above is often a good way to begin doing this.

Making harmonies by ear is all about listening and experimenting.

Hush my babe lie still in slumber

Collected from Mr Thompson by Ralph Vaughan Williams,
 17 August 1905, Dunstan, Northumberland

Roud Number: 23258
 Traditional

Original version from The Full English archive



Simplified version



Hush my babe lie still and sl-um-ber ho - ly an - gels guard thy bed
 Sweet-est bless-ings with - out n - um-ber gent - ly fall u - pon thy head

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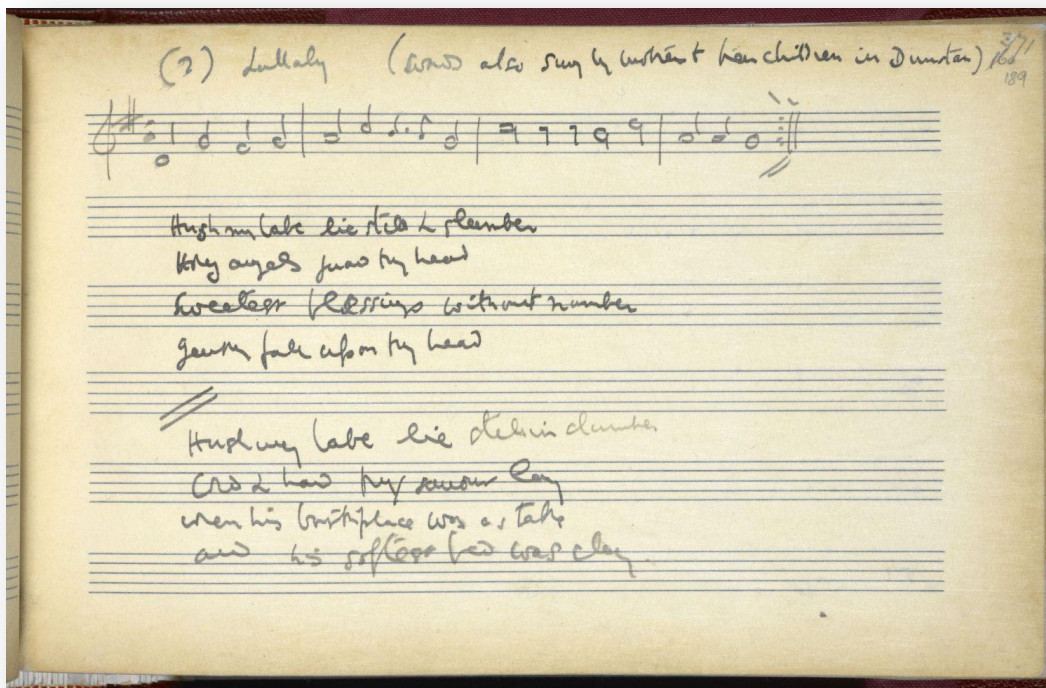


Photo: Original manuscript from The Full English digital archive

Summary

So these songs are an example of some of the many ways folk song could be taught in a secondary school context.

Some of the skills/tasks covered by these two songs:

- Learning by ear!
- Listening skills
- Writing skills
- Singing skills
- Singing in harmony
- Working in a group
- Creative writing
- Rhyme, rhythm and meter
- History and context
- Arranging music
- Broadening ideas of what folk music is

This project focused a lot on song writing and rewriting – this is of course only one of the many ways of exploring traditional folk songs. It worked well for this particular project as it's an easy way in with young people who haven't experienced folk, or haven't even sung or played much music and helped give the students a connection and feeling of ownership over the songs.

These are just a few ideas, there are many other ways that folk song could be used with this age group and older students, both in music lessons and also in other areas of the curriculum, e.g.:

- Solo singing skills
- Using instruments to arrange and accompany a song
- Melody rewriting, or writing a song from scratch
- Could tie in well with English literature, poetry: rhyme, meter, rhythm etc and also creative writing lessons

Songs like *The Wild and Wicked Youth* could tie in well with Citizenship or Sociology as we discussed issues of society/crime etc when working on this song

Could tie in well with History – many songs in the archive from different points in time and exploring many different periods of history.

Hazel Askew

Hazel Askew is a London based singer, musician and workshop leader. She has worked as a performer on the folk scene for many years, most notably with BBC Radio 2 Folk Award nominated vocal trio Lady Maisery and traditional English folk duo The Askew Sisters, with whom she won Best Female Singer at the 2011 Spiral Earth Awards.



Hazel grew up with the folk scene, participating in many youth folk education programmes and now frequently works as a folk educator and workshop leader. She frequently teaches for EFDSS on adult, youth and schools projects, most recently delivering two of the London based Full English Education projects. She has also led workshops and courses for organisations including Folkworks, Aldeburgh Young Musicians, Dartington Summer School, Shakespeare's Globe Theatre and various festivals around the country. www.askewsisters.co.uk



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