

The Wind and the Waves

Using folk arts in inclusive settings



Written by Emmie Ward



JOHN LYON'S CHARITY

English Folk Dance and Song Society

The English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS) is the national development organisation for folk music, dance and related arts, based at Cecil Sharp House, a dedicated folk arts centre and music venue, in Camden, North London. Cecil Sharp House is also home to EFDSS' Vaughan Williams Memorial Library (VWML), England's national folk music and dance archive, which provides free online access to thousands of searchable folk manuscripts and other materials.

EFDSS creates and delivers creative learning projects for children, young people, adults and families at Cecil Sharp House, across London and around the country, often in partnership with other organisations. Learning programmes draw on the diverse and vibrant traditional folk arts of Britain and beyond, focusing on song, music, dance and related art forms such as storytelling, drama, and arts and crafts. www.efdss/education

Inclusive Folk

This resource is part of EFDSS' Inclusive Folk project which aims at improving access to folk arts for young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The project comprises fortnightly Folk Unlimited music making sessions at Cecil Sharp House, outreach sessions at colleges and settings for young people with special educational needs and disabilities, the creation of free learning resources for the EFDSS Resource Bank, and training opportunities for music educators.

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Front page: The barque 'William Fisher' by Joseph Heard © National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London

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Resource Bank: www.efdss.org/resourcebank

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About this resource

This resource has been developed for working with young people with special educational needs and disabilities by EFDSS' Inclusive Folk project. The resource is based on traditional songs about life at sea that we have used in our Folk Unlimited workshops at Cecil Sharp House.

The sea is an enduring and engaging theme to explore both musically and historically. Sea Shanties remain popular to this day. For example, in 2020-21 the sea shanty "The Wellerman" went viral on the social media app TikTok and many people around the world got interested in sea shanties because of this.

Shanties are the work songs sailors sang on board their sailing ships. The songs helped support the work of operating a ship, such as "weighing" anchor (pulling up the anchor from the seabed) and setting sail. These jobs needed a co-ordinated group effort to push and pull together and sea shanties helped to "put heart" into the heavy and monotonous work. There have been many influences on the development of shanties, such as the songs sung by African American sailors in ports in the southern United States, religious hymns, and even very old medieval ballads from across Europe.

The songs

This resource contains three traditional sea shanties with suggestions for activities, and a welcome song and warm up activities based on the popular shanty "South Australia".

Old Billy Riley is a shanty about a captain of a small ship who also likes to dance! It has easily remembered repeated lyric lines and a lively tune.

Lowlands Away is a sad song about a sailor dreaming about his love and feeling very upset as he misses her so much. It is a good song to explore the theme of dreaming and missing people we care about if we are away from home.

Windy Old Weather this is a fun song to learn about fishing and talks about different sea creatures. The chorus has the words "when the wind blows

we'll all pull together" which is great as a theme for how we can support each other if times get hard.

Each song has suggestions on ways you can work with it in your group of young people. The songs come with sheet notation and lyrics on separate printable sheets. There are free downloadable recordings of all the songs that can be found in EFDSS' Resource Bank, which can be used to help learn the songs or to sing along with as backing tracks.

All the songs have elements that make them easy to learn such as repeated lines and choruses. The structure of the songs also lends themselves to improvisation and they are easy to accompany and play along with. For all songs the students will have a variety of ways in which they can learn whilst also providing an opening to engage with our shared cultural heritage.

For more ideas and inspiration for your classes and workshops take a look in the additional material section at the end of this resource.

Welcome Shanty

This welcome song is based on the traditional sea shanty “South Australia”. It can be either sung or chanted. You can include Makaton or BSL signs and movement to illustrate the lyrics. Individual names, like in the examples below, can be replaced with “We’re all on the ship today” if that is more appropriate. To make the song even more engaging you can use a parachute or a piece of large fabric and move that in rhythm with the song.

Below are two examples of how you could illustrate the song with signs and movements or with a parachute.

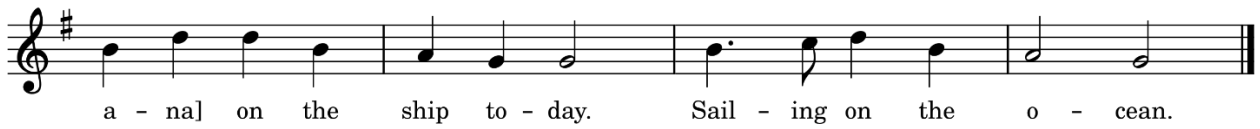
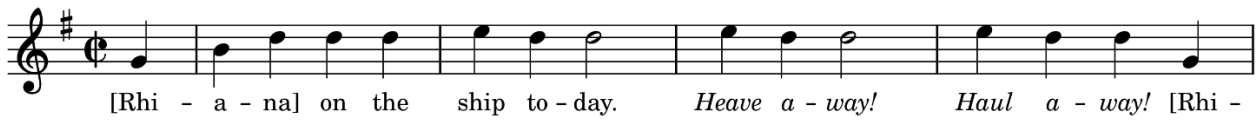
With signs and movements:

Rihanna on the ship today	Sign for boat
<i>Heave away!</i>	Mime pulling rope
<i>Haul away!</i>	Mime pulling rope
Rihanna on the ship today	Sign for boat
Sailing on the ocean	Sign for sea

Or with parachute:

Farooq on the ship today	Rhythmically shake parachute on ground
<i>Heave away!</i>	Everyone lifts parachute up and down
<i>Haul away!</i>	Everyone lifts parachute up and down
Farooq on the ship today	Rhythmically shake parachute on ground
Sailing on the ocean	Everyone lifts parachute up and down

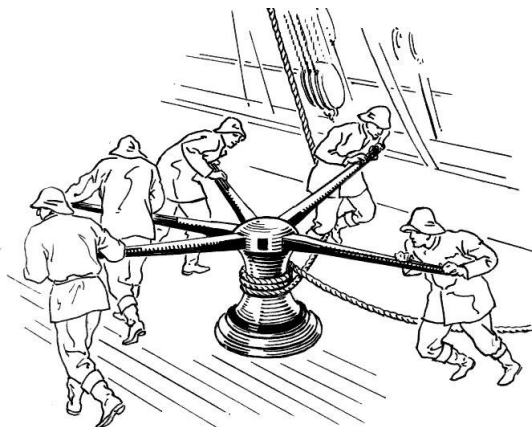
Welcome Shanty



Sailor's warm up

After the welcome song you can use these exercises for a sailor themed warm up. Teach the actions and take turns to call out the commands. You can also let the students imitate you doing the action without any verbal instructions.

Sweep the decks!	Mime sweeping with a big broom
Scrub the decks!	Mime scrubbing the deck
Climb the rigging!	Stretching up arms and climbing to the top
Land ahoy!	Look all around with hand on forehead!
Salut the Captain!	Do a Salut!
Get your sea legs!	Mime swaying from side to side on deck
Sailor overboard!	Mime swimming
Pull on the anchor rope!	Mime pulling on a heavy rope
Turn the Capstan!	Mime pushing a very heavy wheel



Sailors turning the Capstan (Pearson Scott Foresman, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons)

Old Billy Riley

This song is thought to have originated among Black sailors and dock workers in the Caribbean. It is a halyard shanty which was sung when raising or lowering a heavy sail. The halyard is the name of the rope that pulls the sail up. This type of shanty has a chorus at the end of each line. It was originally sung quite fast and was used on board small, fast ships called “droghers”.

The verse line was sung by a “Shanty man” (or “Shanty leader”) who had a strong voice and was followed by the rest of the crew singing the chorus line which had simpler words and was easy to learn.

Ideas for working with this song

- Chant the song instead of singing it.
- Accompany the song with body percussion, such as rhythmically stamping feet or clapping hands.
- Hold a parachute as a group and raise it on the chorus line (*Old Billy Riley Oh*).
- Start the song slowly then build up speed.
- Replace the verse line with percussion. One group play percussion and the other sing the chorus line.
- Accompany the words with Makaton or BSL signs, i.e. signs for boat, dancing, man and sailor.
- Act out the verses i.e. the captain giving out orders, heading off for Antigua and then dancing at the end of the day.
- Accompany the song with a reggae or calypso beat to represent the ship’s journey in the Caribbean.


- In the 19th century, and still to this day, it was common to have ship crews with multi-ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, many shanties include loanwords from different languages. Ask your students if they know any of the song's words in different languages and incorporate these in your song arrangement.
- Take turns to be the “Shanty leader” and chant, sing, play an instrument, use signs or gestures. The rest of the group can then follow with the chorus line.



Sailor dancing on deck of a ship. (Sailors in Port, painted by Thomas Stothard)


Old Billy Riley

C G



Old Bill-y Ri - ley Mist-er Bi-lly Ri - ley Old Bi-lly Ri - ley Oh.

G C G C



Old Bi-lly Ri - ley Mist-er Bi-lly Ri - ley Old Bi-lly Ri - ley Oh.

Old Billy Riley

Old Billy Riley Mr Billy Riley

Old Billy Riley oh.

Old Billy Riley Mr Billy Riley

Old Billy Riley oh.

Old Billy Riley's Captain of the ship

Old Billy Riley's Captain of the ship

Captain of the ship he's going to Antigua

Captain of the ship he's going to Antigua

Old Billy Riley was a dancing master.

Old Billy Riley was a dancing master.

Lowlands Away

This beautiful and haunting song has mysterious origins and was sung both in England, Scotland and America. It can be sung both as a slow sea shanty or as a ballad, that is, a long song with a story. It is less rhythmical than the other songs in this resource and therefore it lends itself to calm soundscapes and a slower tempo.

In the 19th century, sailors were often referred to as “Johns”, so the term “my John” is like saying “my lad” or “my sailor”. “Lowlands” probably refers to a geographical region, such as the Caribbean Lowlands, but in this context it can also be used to mean the “deep sea”.

Ideas for working with this song

- Make a soundscape of the sea using instruments like ocean drums, rainmakers, chimes, small shakers and vocal sounds such as of sea birds. You can use the soundscape as part of an arrangement of the song playing sea sounds throughout or add it at the beginning or end.
- Lowlands away can be accompanied with one chord or note throughout. You can play a sustained G (the root note of the G major chord) or any of the notes that fall in the G major chord (G-B-D). This enables students to play at the level that works for them. Instruments and tools that work well for this are: Apps such as ThumbJam, BandLab or GarageBand on tablets, notes labelled with stickers on a keyboard, individual chimes, guitars or ukuleles tuned to G. You can also sing or hum the notes. We have used adaptive switches that allows pre-recorded sound clips, such as BIGmacks, so that students can play vocal sounds or short musical phrases through the touch of a button.
- The song can be sung unaccompanied with the parachute representing the sea as you move it gently up and down.
- The verses and chorus can be acted out using mime. For example, act out the sailor sleeping and his love coming to visit, or mime sailors doing work which required a slow and steady pace such as pulling up the

anchor. Remember that if the rope was snagged, you could lose the anchor if you didn't pull it slowly.

- You can use Makaton or BSL signs to accompany the song. Here is an example of signs you could use for different verse and chorus lines.

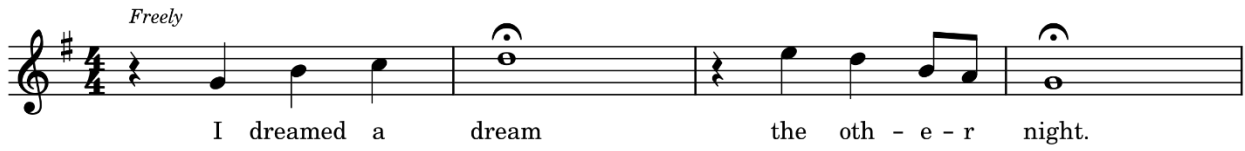
I dreamed a dream the other night	sign for sleep or dream
I dreamed my love she came to me	sign for love
Her cheeks were wet, her eyes did weep	sign for sad
She waved her hand, she said goodbye	sign for goodbye
I then awoke to hear the cry	sign for hear
Oh, watch on deck, oh watch ahoy	sign for look
<i>Lowlands away my John</i>	sign for sea, sign for sailor
<i>Lowlands away</i>	sign for sea




A sailor hails from shore (unknown artist)

Lowlands Away

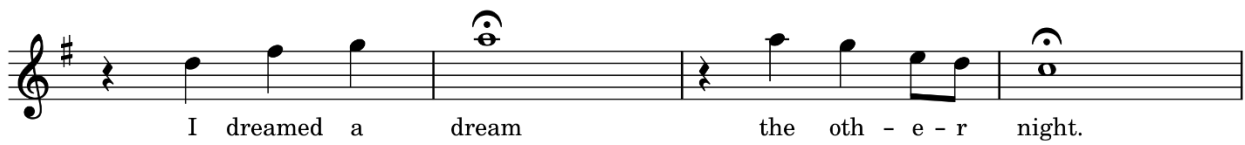
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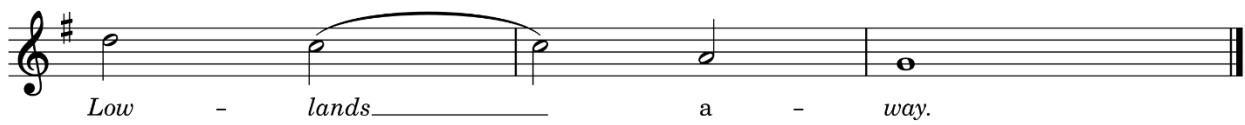
I dreamed a dream the oth - e - r night.



Low - lands _____ Low - lands a - way my John.



I dreamed a dream the oth - e - r night.



Low - lands _____ a - way.

Lowlands Away

I dreamed a dream the other night

Lowlands, lowlands away, my John

I dreamed a dream the other night

Lowlands away.

I dreamed my love she came to me

I dreamed my love she came to me

Her cheeks were wet, her eyes did weep.

Her cheeks were wet, her eyes did weep.

She waved her hand, she said goodbye

She waved her hand, she said goodbye.

I then awoke to hear the cry

I then awoke to hear the cry

Oh, watch on deck, oh watch ahoy!

Oh, watch on deck, oh watch ahoy!

Windy Old Weather

This song was in the repertoire of the famous English folk singer Harry Cox. He knew hundreds of songs and many of them were songs about the sea that he learnt from his father who was a seaman! “Windy Old Weather” may have been a shanty or a fisherman’s song. It originates from East Anglia and the first verse mentions Happisburgh (pronounced ‘*Haiseborough*’) which is a coastal village in Norfolk with an old lighthouse.

Ideas for working with this song

- This song can work as well as a sensory story using a different object for each verse. For example, you could use a fan for the wind, a hair clasp for the crab’s claws, silver sequin fabric for the whiting, perhaps some sushi seaweed to smell for the herring, a small egg shaker or bells for the little sprat and bubbles for the fishing.
- Accompany the song with gestures. Mime each of the sea creatures, fishing folk trawling with big nets and everyone pulling together when the wind blows.
- You can sing the words or chant them. The chorus is good to focus on for learning words.
- Accompany with body percussion. You can have a different body sound for each verse.
- Accompany with percussion instruments and tuned instruments such as xylophones. Play a different sound for each verse to represent the different sea creatures.

You can sing this song as a parachute activity, doing lots of different movements to go with the chorus and verses. Use the suggestions in the table below as inspiration.

Lyrics	Parachute movements
One night we were fishing Happisburgh Light, Fishing and trawling, all through the night	Move the parachute in towards the middle of the circle and back out again in a fishing/trawling motion
<u>Chorus:</u> <i>In this windy old weather, stormy old weather, When the winds blow, we'll all pull together.</i>	<u>Chorus:</u> <i>Raise up, Raise up again Shake it for stormy winds Pull "together" tugging the parachute.</i>
Up jumped the herring, the queen of the sea, She sang out, "Old Skipper, O you can't catch me!	Get students to switch places going underneath the parachute to the other side.
<i>Chorus</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
Up jumped the crab, with his great long claws, He sang out, "Old Skipper, you'll run her ashore!"	Hold parachute still with one hand and make a claw with the other
<i>Chorus</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
Up jumped the sprat, the smallest of all, He sang out, "Old Skipper, you will lose your trawl!"	Bend down holding the parachute to make yourselves smaller
<i>Chorus</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
Up jumped the whiting, with silvery eyes Said, "You haven't got long on the sea for to ride!"	Walk around with the parachute like a merry-go-round
<i>Chorus</i>	<i>Chorus</i>
Up spoke the skipper, "The saying is right, We'll haul up our trawl and we'll go home tonight!"	Move the parachute in towards the middle of the circle and back out again in a fishing/trawling motion.
<i>Chorus</i>	<i>Chorus</i>

Windy Old Weather

G C



One night we were fish-ing in Hai - se - burgh light.

D G



Fish - ing and tra - awl - ing all through the night. *In this*

C



win - dy old wea - ther Storm - y old wea - ther

D G



When the wind blows we'll all pull to - ge - ther _____

Windy Old Weather

One night we were fishing Happisburgh Light,
Fishing and trawling, all through the night
*In this windy old weather, stormy old weather,
When the winds blow, we'll all pull together.*

Up jumped the herring, the queen of the sea,
She sang out, “Old Skipper, O you can't catch me!”

Up jumped the crab, with his great long claws,
He sang out, “Old Skipper, you'll run her ashore!”

Up jumped the sprat, the smallest of all,
He sang out, “Old Skipper, you will lose your trawl!”

Up jumped the whiting, with silvery eyes
Said, “You haven't got long on the sea for to ride!”

Up spoke the skipper, “The saying is right,
We'll haul up our trawl and we'll go home tonight!”

Additional material

We hope you enjoy using the songs in this resource. There are plenty more useful free educational resources in the EFDSS Resource Bank. Below are a few suggestions from the Resource Bank which relates to inclusive learning and songs about the sea.

The video resource [Herrings and Hops](#) provides a good extension activity to the sensory activities in this resource. Watch the video “What shall we do with the herrings head” for more inspiration for creating a sensory story from a folk song.

The resources [Songs of May](#) and [Songs of London Life](#) include more strategies for working with students with special educational needs and disabilities.

For more information on using Makaton in folk songs, the EFDSS resource [Songs of Rural Life](#) is a good starting point.

Learn more about sea songs and shanties in these resources:

[Essex Folk Song Discovery: Coastal Songs](#) is full of songs about pirates, sailors, fisherman and more.

[Black Sailors and Sea Shanties](#), explores the influence of Black sailors on sea shanties.

For a historical perspective on sea shanties and sailor songs, [An introduction to English Sea Songs and Shanties](#) is a good starting point.

Contributors

Emmie Ward is the Lead Tutor for EFDSS' Inclusive Folk project. Emmie is a musician, SEN teacher and multi-sensory storyteller specialising in heritage and folk arts. She is trained in using Sounds of Intent and has many years' experience of working in colleges, schools and other SEN education settings. Emmie is the author of this resource.

Nicholas Goode is a regular tutor for EFDSS' Inclusive Folk project. He has been a professional musician for over twenty years. He holds a PGCE in SEN/Music from the University of Roehampton, London, and has taught and led workshops across all ages, from early years to adults, and worked with students with a wide range of complex needs. In addition to his work as a musician and educator, Nick works extensively in theatre as a composer/arranger and actor.



Nick Goode and Emmie Ward, photo by Brian Slater

Resource Bank

Inspire learning with folk

Explore free online materials for using English traditional folk song, music, dance, drama and other arts in your teaching and leading.



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At the English Folk Dance and Song Society, we champion the folk arts at the heart of England's rich and diverse cultural landscape.

Our award-winning Resource Bank contains over 100 resources – incorporating hundreds of audio files, videos and supporting documents, all free to download. They offer endless practical ways to use folk song, music, dance, drama and more in all sorts of community settings, as well as in formal education.

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