

# WWI Performance Pack: Music Resources

## 1: Listen to the fields

**Nigel:** Think back to your early childhood. Can you remember some of your first experiences? Imagine even further back, to when your parents were young, what do you think life was like then? And in your grandparents' time..? Then how about your great-grandparents', or even great-great-grandparents'..?

**Sophie:** Imagine now that it's about a hundred years ago in Britain – 1914 - a time when trouble is brewing between the countries of Europe. In the summer of 1914 that trouble turns...to war.

**Nigel:** All around Britain young men are urged to 'sign up' – to join the army and fight for 'King and country' over in France and Belgium, against the invading German forces. It became the terrible conflict we now know as World War One.

See if you can gently tap your knees in time, as you follow the words of a patriotic song of the time encouraging people to 'sign up'.

**Both:**

*Oh, we don't want to lose you  
But we think you ought to go  
For your King and your country  
Both need you so  
We shall want you and miss you  
But with all our might and main  
We shall cheer you, thank you, kiss you,  
When you come back again.*



**Nigel:**

I'm Nigel.

Sophie: And I'm Sophie. A bit later on, you'll be joining in with that 'King and country' chorus. But we're going to start with another song from the time, which was very popular with the soldiers marching off to war in 1914.

Nigel: It's called 'It's a long way to Tipperary'. I'll sing two lines at a time, then you copy them singing with Sophie straight away.

*It's a long way to Tipperary,  
It's a long way to go.*

Sophie: *It's a long way to Tipperary,  
It's a long way to go.*

Nigel: *It's a long way to Tipperary  
To the sweetest girl I know!*

Sophie: *It's a long way to Tipperary  
To the sweetest girl I know!*

Nigel: *Goodbye, Piccadilly,  
Farewell, Leicester Square!*

Sophie: *Goodbye, Piccadilly,  
Farewell, Leicester Square!*

Nigel: *It's a long, long way to Tipperary,  
But my heart's right there.*

Sophie: *It's a long, long way to Tipperary,  
But my heart's right there.*

Nigel: Another popular song from the time is 'Pack up your troubles' and again it was a favourite of the soldiers going off to war. For this song we're going to focus on the well-known tune.



You'll start by joining in, to the sound 'doo'...then hum...

Sophie: Then whistle - or try to! And then sing 'doo' again. Everyone ready to sing 'doo'?

[SONG WITH WHISTLING AND HUMMING]

Now hum! Whistle! 'Doo' again.

Nigel: Have a go at that again, all keeping together and making the different sounds flow one into the other. 'Doo' first, then humming...

Sophie: Then whistling. Then 'doo' again...are you ready?

[SONG WITH WHISTLING AND HUMMING]

And relax! We'll join up those three 'recruitment' songs into a World War One 'Medley Mix' a little later on.

Perhaps you could hear the regular rhythm of those songs? Their steady beat makes them ideal tunes to sing while marching. Try just softly tapping the toes of your left-foot and right-foot on the ground, in time:

Keep that going softly...

As you do, try imitating some short, military rhythms by clapping them with me. Here come the drums to copy:

[DRUM PATTERNS TO COPY]

Nigel: And stop! Some of those rhythm-patterns had particular meanings for that time. They conveyed 'orders' that soldiers were taught to recognise - like a 'code'.



Sophie: And as well as learning rhythms the troops needed to understand various trumpet calls or bugle calls - short tunes using just a few notes. These might give 'instructions' to move in a particular direction, or signal a particular time of the day.

[BUGLE CALL] That means 'Advance!'

Nigel: [BUGLE CALL] That means 'Cease fire.'

Sophie: [BUGLE CALL] That means it's morning – time to 'Wake up!' Later you could try composing some of your own rhythm-patterns and three-note tunes, for sending different kinds of coded messages.

Nigel: We're going to think now about what life was like in Britain just before World War One.

Sophie: The summer of 1914 was a really hot one. And our song about the summer of 1914 begins with an image of crops growing in the countryside on a sunny summer's day. Listen to me sing the first part, then copy with Nigel.

*Listen to the fields of wheat  
Rustle in the summer sun*

Nigel: Your go...

*Listen to the fields of wheat  
Rustle in the summer sun*

Nigel: Did you hear how the gentle tune rises and falls, with little jumps? The next 'phrase' goes up, and down, and up again. Listen and copy:

Sophie: *Hear the skylark singing out*



Nigel: Your turn...

*Hear the skylark singing out*

Sophie: Do you hear that skylark? And what else?

Nigel: Yes, the next part of the song is about church-bells and it goes down-up-down in small steps - a bit like bells - then gets quieter and quieter. Listen and copy again:

*Hear the church bells ringing*

*In the distance...*

*In the distance...*

*In the distance....*

Sophie: Your turn...

*Hear the church bells ringing*

*In the distance...*

*In the distance...*

*In the distance....*

Let's put the whole of verse one together, singing very gently.  
After three..a 1-2-3...

Both: *Listen to the fields of wheat*  
*Rustle in the summer sun*  
*Hear the skylark singing out*  
*Hear the church bells ringing*  
*In the distance...*  
*In the distance...*  
*In the distance....*



Nigel: We'll put the whole tune together shortly but next, things change – the music gets fast and busy, with four beats in a bar, as we sing about the stream, and the fish swimming towards the river. Listen to me then copy with Sophie in this next 'sequence' of short phrases going up and up and up... Ready to listen first?

*And the stream flows through the meadow  
And the fish swims to the river*

Sophie: *And the stream flows through the meadow  
And the fish swims to the river*

Then, as we move towards the town, the musical phrases go down, and down, and down.

Nigel: *And the river pushes onwards  
Past the village to the town*

Sophie: *And the river pushes onwards  
Past the village to the town*

Nigel: Remember those phrases going up, up, up...then down, down, down...because it's the same tune for the next four lines, about working in the factory and home life. Sing those new words now...

Both: *All the people and the factory  
And the hustle and the bustle  
And the home life, and the voices  
And the sunset tumbles down...*

Sophie: Let's put that middle section of the song together. Starting with the stream flowing. After three - a 1-2-3...



Both: *And the stream flows through the meadow  
And the fish swims to the river  
And the river pushes onwards  
Past the village to the town  
All the people and the factory  
And the hustle and the bustle  
And the home life, and the voices  
And the sunset tumbles down...*

Nigel: So, that's all the *tune* for the song 'Listen to the fields'. Now make sure you can see verse 2.

Sophie: The words are about day turning to night, the weather turning stormy and the wind of change. They convey a sense of foreboding about terrible events about to affect the countries of Europe and beyond. Try singing the words of verse 2 now, making them flow naturally. And linger on the quiet notes at the end – as you slow down for the last phrase of all, 'hold on' to the very last note. Here we go then, singing softly and thoughtfully...

Both: *Listen to the fields of wheat  
See the clouds roll past the moon  
Hear the wind of change, it blows  
Hear the thunder rumble  
In the distance...  
In the distance...  
In the distance...*

Sophie: It's time to get marching again and to put together the recruitment songs for our World War 1 'Medley Mix'. To start, there's 'Your King and country want you'. If you're not sure of that tune, just say the words in time, as your toes tap the ground gently.



## WW1 Performance Pack - Music

Nigel: Then you sing the chorus of 'It's a long way to Tipperary', then end with 'Pack up your troubles' singing to 'doo', whistling, humming...

Sophie: ...and 'doo' again.

Nigel: Make your voices bright and positive. Beginning with the words 'Oh we don't want to lose you.' Here we go...a-1, 2, 3...

Both: *Oh, we don't want to lose you  
But we think you ought to go  
For your King and your Country  
Both need you so  
We shall want you and miss you  
But with all our might and main  
We shall cheer you, thank you, kiss you,  
When you come back again.*

*It's a long way to Tipperary  
It's a long way to Tipperary,  
It's a long way to go.  
It's a long way to Tipperary  
To the sweetest girl I know!  
Goodbye, Piccadilly,  
Farewell, Leicester Square!  
It's a long long way to Tipperary,  
But my heart's right there.*

[WHISTLING AND HUMMING TO 'PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES']

Nigel: Next time the mood is very different. We'll find ourselves with the soldiers in the front-line trenches with songs which - through their grim humour - reflect some of the realities of war.





Sophie: To end today, let's come back to the slow, thoughtful mood from our song 'Listen to the fields', reflecting life in Britain in the summer of 1914 and the serious times ahead. See how well you can blend all your voices together, to create a smooth, thoughtful sound - almost like one voice. Everyone ready?

Both: *Listen to the fields of wheat  
Rustle in the summer sun  
Hear the skylark singing out  
Hear the church bells ringing  
In the distance...  
In the distance...  
In the distance...*

*And the stream flows through the meadow  
And the fish swims to the river  
And the river pushes onwards  
Past the village to the town  
All the people and the factory  
And the hustle and the bustle  
And the home life, and the voices  
And the sunset tumbles down...*

*Listen to the fields of wheat  
See the clouds roll past the moon  
Hear the wind of change, it blows  
Hear the thunder rumble  
In the distance...  
In the distance...  
In the distance...*

