



Amazing Egyptians

Teaching and performance notes

Before teaching the song, why not play it as background music to other Egyptian-related classroom activities, so that your class can become familiar with it?

1. Listen to and discuss 'Amazing Egyptians'

Listen to 'Amazing Egyptians', then ask the children to describe the general feel of the song (eg fast, slow, smooth, bouncy, soft, spiky). Ask what gives the song its mood. (The words, the tempo, the instruments, the melody and rhythm and how they all combine.)

2. Read and discuss the lyrics

Read the lyrics together. Discuss which aspects of Egyptian life are described in each verse. (You could follow this with a fun quiz, with hieroglyphs awarded for each historical fact recalled.)

3. Learn the chorus

Listen to the chorus (track 2). All together, say the words slowly and in rhythm several times. Encourage the children to enjoy the rhythm of the words and articulate clearly. Gradually build up speed! (To help the class remember the lyrics, they could make up simple hand gestures or dance moves to go with each line. British Sign Language interpretation works particularly well.) Practise singing along with the track. (Notice that at the end of the last chorus the last two lines are sung three times.)

4. Learn the verses

Learn each verse thoroughly before moving on to the next. (Notice that verses one and two are sung consecutively before the first chorus. The lyrics are a bit of a giveaway!) Listen to the verse you are about to learn (tracks 4 to 7). Read the words aloud together - slowly, clearly and in rhythm. Emphasise the importance of clear articulation, especially when imparting tricky bits of information to an audience! (To help the children remember the lyrics, encourage them to visualise what they are describing.) Sing along with the guide vocal tracks several times until the class is confident.

5. Practise singing the whole song

Once everyone is confident singing both the chorus and the verses along with the guide vocal track, practise singing with the backing track (track 11).

6. Add untuned percussion

Using the downloadable/photocopiable parts and the untuned percussion track (track 10) teach the untuned percussion parts. There are three main percussion instruments used in the song: drum, tambourine and cymbal. In the choruses, both drum and tambourine play. In the verses, only the drum is heard. Notice the impact of the cymbal at the beginning of the second chorus. Cymbal crashes continue throughout the rest of the song, adding a majestic feel. Listen to the rhythms (track 10) and then practise beating or clapping each rhythm as a group. Practise playing the percussion parts along with the backing track (track 11).

7. Add tuned percussion

There is one tuned percussion part (for either timpani or bass chime bars). It begins after four bars introduction and plays throughout. It copies the rhythm that underpins the whole song. Use the tuned percussion practice track (track 9) and the downloadable tuned percussion part to learn the part and then practise playing it along with the backing track (track 11).

8. Add the second voice part

The second voice part comes in at the final chorus. Use track 7 to learn the part and then practice it with the guide vocal track (track 1). When this is secure, practice it with the backing track (track 11).

7. Prepare to perform

Decide on a plan for the performance, recording as much detail as possible, i.e.

Amazing Egyptians

Introduction	CD backing track
Verse 1	Details of who is singing the first part Bass bars/timpani part
Verse 2	Details of who is singing the first part
Chorus 1	Details of who is singing the first part and who the second Side drum (at the end of the chorus)
Verse 3	Details of who is singing the first part and who the second
Chorus 2	Cymbal part
Verse 4	Details of who is singing the first part and who the second Group 2 rhythm block accompaniment
Chorus 3	Details of who is singing the first part and who the second Tambourine part, cymbal part
Coda	Details of who is singing the first part and who the second

With your class, discuss non-musical factors that help make a good performance (eg enthusiasm, confidence, energy, clear articulation)

As a group, think about:

- when and where you will be performing the song
- dress code / costume

Decide how you will stage your performance (eg everyone standing in formal rows, or in group tableau) and rehearse in the performance space if possible.

8. Performance

Hold a dress rehearsal or final run-through, then discuss last minute improvements in a positive way!

Perform 'Amazing Egyptians' to a live audience.