

CARNEGIE HALL
Weill Music Institute

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A Program of Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute
for Students in Grades Three Through Five

Songwriting Strategies Guide

The Orchestra Sings

The following pages offer concrete suggestions to guide you and your students as you build a new song inspired by “We Shall Not Be Moved.” The two of us—Katie and Emily—are teachers who work in classrooms and also love to write songs, and we designed these activities based on what has worked well in our past collaborations together.

We have tried to come up with ways to develop not just new lyrics with your students, but also new variations on the melody. This is often a tougher process—but it’s worth it!

The three ideas presented here are just ideas. Use them in any way you see fit: Use them in parts, combine them, or make up your own approach entirely.

We loved having the chance to imagine this creative work, and we hope you and your students have fun doing it.

—Emily Eagen and Katie Traxler

We Shall Not Be Moved (Original Melody)

F C C7 F F/Eb

We shall not, we shall not be moved, We shall not, we shall not be moved, like a

Bb F dm F/C C F

tree that's plan - ted by the wa - ter, We shall not be moved

I. Melodies for Completion: Call and Response

How can you even begin to vary a melody you already know and love? Start by varying half of it! In the following examples, we kept half of the original melody and left space for you and your students to fill in the blanks. The first example keeps in the “call” phrase and takes out the “response” phrase; the second does the opposite. Listen to the “call-only” version [here](#). Listen to the “response-only” version [here](#).

“Call-Only” Version

Musical notation for the “Call-Only” version. The melody is in 4/4 time, starting with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The response melody starts with a quarter note Bb4, followed by quarter notes C5, D5, E5, and F5.

“Response-Only” Version

Musical notation for the “Response-Only” version. The melody is in 4/4 time, starting with a quarter rest, followed by a quarter note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. The response melody starts with a quarter note Bb4, followed by quarter notes C5, D5, E5, and F5.

Katie wrote her own version by creating new melodic material for the “call” phrases while preserving the response melody. She also created new text, keeping with the call-and-response format.

Katie’s New Song

Musical notation for Katie’s New Song. The melody is in 4/4 time, starting with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, C5, and D5. The response melody starts with a quarter note Bb4, followed by quarter notes C5, D5, E5, and F5. The lyrics are: Hold my hand let’s stand strong, to - ge - ther we’ll be heard Sing with me loud and long, to - ge - ther we’ll be heard, Let your light shine bright - ly like the sun, _____ to - ge - ther we’ll be heard.

Task

Have your students fill in the blanks to create new melodic material by using one of the two templates above. You can demonstrate for them how they might start with a pitch or rhythm that differs from the original. Write lyrics to go with your new melody. You can keep the call-and-response format, or try something else!

II. Exploring a New Meter: 6/8

What's another great way to open up a melody and imagine it differently? Change the meter! Here is a version of "We Shall Not Be Moved" in 6/8 meter, both with and without lyrics. Listen to it [here](#).

6/8 Version

Musical score for "We Shall Not Be Moved" in 6/8 meter. The score consists of two staves. The first staff shows the melody with lyrics and chords: F, C, C7, F, F/Eb. The second staff shows the melody with lyrics and chords: Bb, F, dm, F/C, C, F. The lyrics are: "We shall not, we shall not be moved. We shall not, we shall not be moved, like a tree that's plant - ed on the wa - ter, We shall not be moved".

6/8 Version: Your Lyrics

Musical score for "6/8 Version: Your Lyrics" in 6/8 meter. The score consists of two staves. The first staff shows the melody with chords: F, C, C7, F, F/Eb. The second staff shows the melody with chords: Bb, F, dm, F/C, C, F. There are no lyrics provided for this version.

Task

Have your students move to the music while listening and singing or humming along. How does moving inspire us to feel the music and think about the original text? Think of how a tree moves in the wind, staying rooted yet moving at the same time. Just as a tree is strong and flexible at the same time, how are people both strong and flexible? What is something in your life that you've had to be flexible about? Why is this important in a community?

Create lyrics for this new 6/8 version of the song that focus on strength and community. Stick to or stray from the version above as much as you like. Feel free to change the rhythm or create new twists and turns to the melody as you write your version.

III. A New Perspective: Reversing the Melody

Our last “recipe” for melodic variation might seem complex at first. We took the original melody ... and reversed it! Listen to it [here](#).

Reversed Version

What can you do with a backwards melody? By way of example, here’s a song Emily wrote that uses this technique. She took the song “Twinkle Twinkle” and wrote it out backwards, flipping one phrase at a time. (It turns out to be a great melody!) She also wrote words from the star’s perspective, answering the children who sing to it at night. She wanted it to feel like a mirror image of the star, reflecting back to the children.

Emily’s New Song

B \flat E \flat B \flat B \flat F B \flat F

Lit - tle child - ren on the land, you who ask me who I am:

F B \flat E \flat F F B \flat E \flat F

5 I am not a dia - mond bright, I am made of fire and light.

B \flat E \flat B \flat E \flat B \flat F B \flat F

9 I am old and you are new, but you are made of star - dust too... —

Task

Using the backwards melody for “We Shall Not Be Moved,” create lyrics with your class. What’s another perspective you can take on the original song?

Think about the tree that is planted by the water. What do you think the tree has seen over the years? What change do you think it wishes to see in the world? Here’s another “reverse” idea: Are there times when the opposite of the original lyrics can be equally true? Are there times when we should be moved? And for what purpose?

Let these ideas—or another way of seeing the song—inspire you when creating the new lyrics. Feel free to make changes to this melody and the harmonies we’ve shared, or just use part of the melody as inspiration to create something new.