When the Clouds Are Sinking Low/A Wonderous Place (ES1-S1)

Vocal Ease More

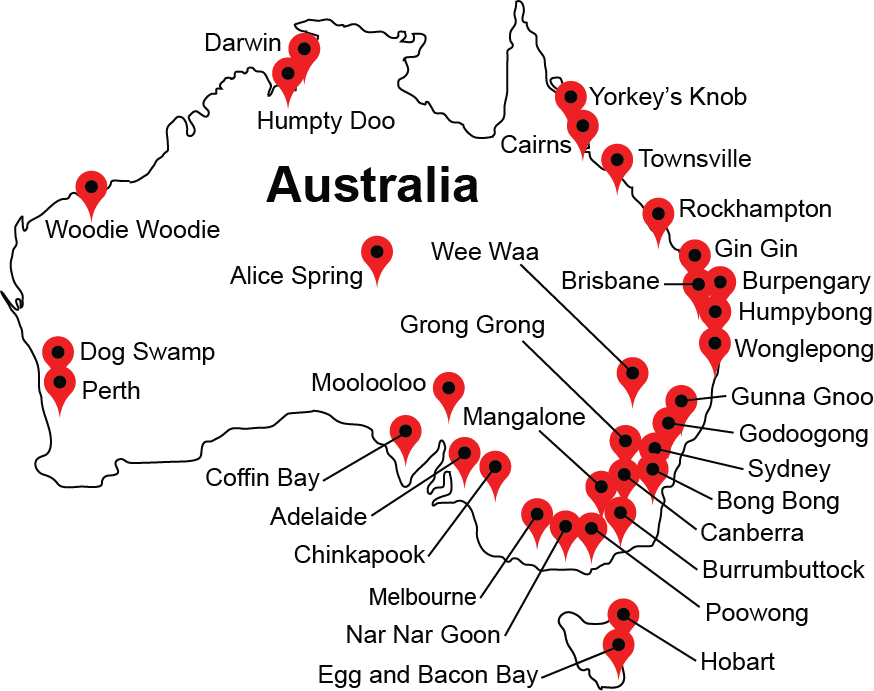
Partner songs – what can music tell us about the past?

* [Watch a short video overview by the composer](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_h7zqF_3lSk&index=10&list=PL4OaBCdO34bDB4-1G5-cAxeo7PoTsMfI9&t=0s) (0:38)
* [Watch a short video overview of the teaching points](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3hfcX3ERsI4&index=9&list=PL4OaBCdO34bDB4-1G5-cAxeo7PoTsMfI9&t=0s) (0:38)
* [Listen and follow the score](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8xpzNQAlek&feature=youtu.be) (4:06)
* [Listen to the full performance](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/08443a4e-be42-4d1f-a774-686547c55ee5/1/Partner%20Songs_perf.mp3) (4:11)
* [Listen to the full performance with When the clouds as a feature](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/08443a4e-be42-4d1f-a774-686547c55ee5/1/Partner%20Songs_song%201%20feature.mp3) (4:11)
* [Listen to the full performance with A wonderous place as a feature](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/08443a4e-be42-4d1f-a774-686547c55ee5/1/Partner%20Songs_song%202%20feature.mp3) (4:11)
* [Listen to the backing track](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/08443a4e-be42-4d1f-a774-686547c55ee5/1/Partner%20Songs_bkng.mp3) (4:10)
* [Access the lyric sheet](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/90bed73e-ba2c-45b6-8ca1-c2af4a333192/1/when-the-clouds-lyric-sheet.pdf)

Background to When the Clouds Are Sinking Low/A Wonderous Place

All the places in this song are in Australia. Many towns have Aboriginal names such as Nar Nar Goo which is the Aboriginal name for koala, Bong Bong meaning blind or a watercourse lost in a swamp and Chinkapook which is thought to have had origins in the Aboriginal words for foot, red pool or red ochre. Research the others mentioned in the song to discover the meanings and their mysteries. The composer did [her own research](http://list-directory.info/lists/place-names.html) to find these unusual places!

Musically, this song is made up of two songs that can be sung separately or together. It’s a two for one deal! These types of songs are known as partner songs. Whilst this takes time to practice, the beautiful harmonies are worth striving for.



Quick start menu

1. Listen to the When the Clouds are Sinking Low/A Wonderous Place and keep the beat. Add movement to help identify the different sections of the music.
2. Learn to sing both songs. Put them together as partner songs if you wish.
3. Explore the phrasing and different feel of each song. Add instruments to represent the different sections.
4. Experiment with accompaniments to add to the songs.

Key to icons

Concepts of music

Duration Duration

Pitch Pitch

Dynamics Dynamics

Tone colour Tone colour

Structure Structure

Learning experiences

Performing Performing

Organising sound/composition Organising sound/composition

Listen Listen

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Learning across the curriculum

| Cross-curriculum priorities | General capabilities | Other learning across the curriculum areas |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia  Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures | Critical and creative thinking  Ethical understanding  Information and communication technology capability  Intercultural understanding  Literacy  Numeracy  Personal and social capability | Civics and citizenship  Difference and diversity |

Get familiar

Outcomes and purpose

MUES1.1

MUES1.2

MUES1.4

MUS1.1

MUS1.2

MUS1.4

Learn the two songs.

Keep the beat.

| Learning experiences | ES1-S1 activities | Concepts of music | Watch the lesson |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Listen | Context – follow the lyrics and discuss what happens in this song? What do the students notice in the second half of the recording? This is the two songs being sung simultaneously. Discuss the text of both songs. What do they mean? Plot the areas mentioned in the second song on a map. How do the songs relate musically and in terms of the lyrics?  Listen to the recording and focus on the town names. This will help with pronunciation during the singing of the faster song.  As a class, follow the words and learn to sing the songs separately. It is preferable to wait until the students are very familiar with both songs before attempting to put them together (if at all).  What do these songs tell us about Australia and the past? What has happened to the town mentioned now and what was their role in the establishment of our country. Discuss the vastness of our country and the changing ways that we live. Music has played an important role in communicating that social and physical history. Singing songs plays an important part in communicating stories in every culture! | Pitch Structure |  |
| Performing Listen | [Keep the beat](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n_Fac7hqVq0&index=2&list=PL4OaBCdO34bDB4-1G5-cAxeo7PoTsMfI9&t=0s) – with words displayed, keep the beat whilst listening to the recording of the full song. Try this a few times with a variety of methods for beat keeping including movement (such as stepping), clapping or other body percussion (such as clicking or [patsching](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/creative-arts/glossary-of-key-words)).  Keep the beat at a slow tempo and then at double speed - slow for the first song and fast for the second. During the partner song section swap between the two tempos. Again, explore this using a variety of body percussion. | Duration Structure | [Vocal Ease More video thumbnail for Get familiar, 'Keep the beat' - When the clouds are sinking low.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n_Fac7hqVq0&index=2&list=PL4OaBCdO34bDB4-1G5-cAxeo7PoTsMfI9&t=0s)  (1:20) |
| Performing Listen | [Investigate the music](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WDWw3HFMoQ&index=3&list=PL4OaBCdO34bDB4-1G5-cAxeo7PoTsMfI9&t=0s) – explore the phrasing of the songs. During the slower first song, the students could use a parachute, scarves or Japanese rice balls to show the length of the phrases.  For example, move the parachute up for 4 and down for 4 to show the 8 beats. Alternatively, with right hand starting in front of left shoulder, move it to an outstretched position to the right for the 8 beats of the phrase then swap hands and do to the left for the next 8 with scarves. If using rice paper balls, try to keep them in the air for 8 beats.  During the 'faster' feeling song explore a different way of showing the phrases. For example, use ribbon sticks, throwing a sandbag or bouncing a ball for these shorter phrases. They are generally 4 beats long. | Duration Structure | [Vocal Ease More video thumbnail for Get familiar, 'Investigate the music' - when the clouds are sinking low](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WDWw3HFMoQ&index=3&list=PL4OaBCdO34bDB4-1G5-cAxeo7PoTsMfI9&t=0s)  (1:46) |
| Performing Organising sound/composition Listen | [Move](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s2M8Gv-IaFk&index=4&list=PL4OaBCdO34bDB4-1G5-cAxeo7PoTsMfI9&t=0s) – during the didgeridoo section the students should explore body percussion with a partner. Start with a simple pattern such as facing each other and clapping right hands for 8 beats, then left for 8 and repeating or stepping in one direction for 8 and back for 8.  Once the students are confident with this they should create their own body percussion or movement patterns to match this section of the music. | Duration Structure | [Vocal Ease More video thumbnail for get familiar, 'Move' - When the clouds are sinking low](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s2M8Gv-IaFk&index=4&list=PL4OaBCdO34bDB4-1G5-cAxeo7PoTsMfI9&t=0s)  (0:54) |
| Performing Organising sound/composition Listen | Perform – sing with the complete recording of the song. Add movement as appropriate. When the song divides into partner songs (the two songs together) choose one part to sing as a class (with the other being sung on the recording). | Pitch Structure |  |

Spice it up

Outcomes and purpose

MUES1.1

MUES1.2

MUES1.4

MUS1.1

MUS1.2

MUS1.4

To maintain the beat.

To further investigate the structure.

To sing both songs together and hear the harmonies.

To accompany the song using ostinatos.

| Learning experiences | ES1-S1 activities | Concepts of music | Watch the lesson |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Performing Listen | [Keep the beat](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IzQ3k40xMbQ&index=5&list=PL4OaBCdO34bDB4-1G5-cAxeo7PoTsMfI9&t=0s) – revise the songs by singing and keeping the beat using some form of body percussion or movement. Repeat one of the activities previously completed.  Do a stone passing game to demonstrate the differences in the feel of the tempo. The students should be in a circle and then pass a stone or collective of objects to the right on the beat. Start this process slowly by practicing with the words “pick up, pass”, whereby they pick up the stone in front of them and then pass it to floor in front of the person next to them.  Repeat this activity with the second song at the faster feeling tempo. Use the full recording of the partner songs and do the stone passing game with the other song playing (or even try both with two different circles). Play the stone passing game only when the chosen song is being performed. | Duration Pitch | [Vocal Ease More video thumbnail for Spice it up, 'Keep the beat' - When the clouds are sinking low.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IzQ3k40xMbQ&index=5&list=PL4OaBCdO34bDB4-1G5-cAxeo7PoTsMfI9&t=0s)  (3:57) |
| Performing Organising sound/composition Listen | Accompaniment – using available percussion instruments, play on the beat throughout the song, either as a whole class or in the two groups to represent the two songs and only play with one song or the other. During the didgeridoo section the students could improvise rhythms on their instruments.  If available play melodic instruments such as xylophones, boomwhackers or ukuleles on the beat or at the start of each bar. Use the chord notes as indicated on the music and following the notes indicated by the chord symbols. | Duration Tone colour |  |
| Performing Organising sound/composition Listen | Experiment – create an ostinato pattern to accompany the song throughout. Start with rhythms such as (long, long, short, short, short, short throughout the song) [audio]. Change this if required to explore different rhythms.  During all the instrumental sections in the recording, students should use claves or other available classroom or environmental percussion instruments to improvise rhythms. If instruments are unavailable students could either improvise or create clapping games or patterns with a partner. | Duration |  |
| Performing Organising sound/composition | Perform – use your ostinato and movement accompaniments to sing one song with the complete recording of the song | Duration Pitch |  |

Take it apart

Outcomes and purpose

MUES1.1

MUES1.2

MUES1.4

MUS1.1

MUS1.2

MUS1.4

Singing the songs separately and confidently.

Singing the songs together in harmony.

| Learning experiences | ES1-S1 activities | Concepts of music |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Performing Listen | Sing – revise singing the song. Choose only one song to sing during the combined partner song section. Select one activity already completed to perform with the song, always reinforcing the beat. | Duration Pitch Structure |
| Performing Organising sound/composition Listen | Divide – group the students into two groups. Allocate one group to one song and another group to the other. Perform the song with just one group singing their part during the partner song section. The recording will assist with this. The other group could perform one of the previous ostinatos underneath. Swap roles. Use the recordings with each song featured separately to assist.   * [When the clouds as a feature](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/08443a4e-be42-4d1f-a774-686547c55ee5/1/Partner%20Songs_song%201%20feature.mp3) (4:11) * [A wonderous place as a feature](https://schoolsequella.det.nsw.edu.au/file/08443a4e-be42-4d1f-a774-686547c55ee5/1/Partner%20Songs_song%202%20feature.mp3) (4:11) | Pitch Structure |
| Performing Organising sound/composition Listen | Conquer – sing both songs together during the partner song section. This will take some practice and it is important to place a confident student within each group to assist in this process. Use the recording with the complementary song at a soft dynamic level to assist, and then try without. This will take time and practice, but it is well-worth it!  A performance of this song could consist of ostinatos, ukuleles or other melodic accompaniment, non-melodic accompaniment singing with the backing track. Let your students or your imagination guide your arrangement.  Find other partner songs to try this learning structure with. For example, Native Companions Dancing, Pease Pudding Hot and A Ram Sam Sam, Row Row Row Your Boat and Kookaburra Sits in the Old Gum Tree. | Pitch Dynamics Tone colour Structure |

Where to from here?

Purpose

Using partner songs as a way into part singing and exploring pitch and harmony in combination with other musical concepts.

Activities ES1-S1

* Explore stone passing games in two groups within other partner songs or rounds.
* Experiment with changing tempo from slow to double tempo.
* Use objects such as scarves or rice paper balls to reinforce the phrasing.
* Find other partner songs and use these techniques to learn to sing them.
* Find, discuss and sing other songs that tell us stories about our country and the past either geographically or socially. For example, Click Go the Shears, We were only Nineteen, The Band Played Waltzing Matilda, Bound for Botany Bay, Waltzing Matilda, Advance Australia Fair.



* Design your own town. What does a town need to survive? Describe or create designs to reflect its purpose and features. What will the population do in your town? What will you call it? Where will it be on the map and why? What are the financial implications of establishing your town?
* Create souvenirs what will they features and why? What is the main industry of your town? Design outfits, buildings and historical monuments for your town.
* Create Australian artworks reflecting your town based upon those of the great Australian masters such as Russell Drysdale. Why did they paint the way they did? What do you see in their artworks and what does this tell us about the agriculture, economics and structures around them?
* Explore the economics behind the successful maintenance of townships. Look at business models, profit and lost as to their success.
* Using a map of Australia. Plot the towns mentioned in this song. What is the distance between them and to the nearest large centre? What trends do we notice in their survival as a town to this day? Examine population changes over the years through graphs.
* What is clockwise and anticlockwise? Why do we generally dance in an anti-clockwise direction? Try dancing in a clockwise direction. What do you notice? Can we turn back time?
* Explore the relationship of metre to song. For example, why are most songs in 4 yet dances are generally in 8? What so they sometimes then have a section with 16 beats? Explore movement in 3 what is the difference and why? How would you dance in 5, 7, and 9? What are odd numbers more difficult to dance to?
* Examine the seasons and time of year in Australia. People say our seasons are changing. Why?



* Creative Arts - Visual Arts – Reflect upon those of the great Australian masters such as Russell Drysdale, Norman Lindsay, Margaret Preston and Margaret Olley. Dance – What is clockwise and anticlockwise? Why do we generally dance in an anti-clockwise direction? Try dancing in a clockwise direction. What do you notice?
* English – find other Australian folksongs, poetry and stories. Examine Australian literature and art. What do you consistently notice? Create your own artworks or literature/stories. Think about representative and adaption rather than copying. Read about Ted Egan. He creates Australian literature and is famous for storytelling through song. Why not make your own Australian books and songs?
* HSIE - History – investigate the names of the towns mentioned in the song. What meaning do they have? What do we know about their names and their significance to Australia history such as Bong Bong have housed important police stations and supposedly hosting many famous Australian ghosts still to this day? Explore colonial Australia, urbanisation and change. Look at Australian history and poetry. Explore Australia as a nation. What role did rural and regional Australia have in the creation of our country? Explore historical monuments in the community. Why do we have them? What makes a community? Geography – investigate the names of the towns mentioned in the song. Plot them on a map. Research other towns in Australia with unusual names (such as those initially used by the composer) to find on a map.
* PDHPE – learn folk or bush dances of Australia and beyond. Discuss what makes a community and strong pillars of our society. What makes a great Australian? What makes you a great Australian and what else could you do to be even greater and make a difference to yourself, your school, your family and your community?