

War and Music Topic

Song Story 3: Scots Wha Hae - Scottish folksong

In 1314 Edward II, king of England set off north with an army of 100,000 soldiers to fight against the Scottish under the leadership of Robert The Bruce, who had 30,000 soldiers. Even though the Scottish army was smaller they won. The battle took place at Bannockburn and the Scottish soldiers knew the boggy and marshy land so well that they were able to confuse the English and send them fleeing back to England.

The words of this song were written over 400 years later by the most famous of all Scottish poets, Robert Burns in 1794, but the melody is said to be one from the time of the Battle of Bannockburn itself.

Burns has written the words to inspire the Scottish soldiers to fight rather than be captured by the English and become prisoners or slaves. He mentions William Wallace, a Scottish hero who was killed by the English in 1305 to inspire feelings of revenge in the soldiers. The tune is a bit like a march and has dotted rhythms which are considered typical of Scottish folk music.

Aim: To sing a song in tune; To improvise accompaniment patterns; To read music

Music Skills: Playing on instruments; Singing; Improvising

Resources: The score as you see below.

Activities: reading the score; play or sing the song, improvise or compose accompaniment patterns

- ★ Write the letter names of the notes over the tune of the song.
- ★ Learn to play this tune on the instruments.
- ★ Make up some accompaniment patterns to go with the song

Scots Wha Hae!



Scots wha hae wi' Wal-lace bled, Scots wham Bruce has of-ten led,
Wha will be a trai-tor knave? Wha can fill a co-wrd's grave?
By Op-pres-sion's woes and pains, By your sons in ser-vile chains,



Wel-come to your go-ry bed, Or to Vic-to-rie! Now's the day and now's the hour;
Wha sae base as be a slave? Let him turn and flee! Wha for Scot-land's King and Law
We will drain our dear-est veins But they shall be free! Lay the proud u-sur-pers low!



See the front o' bat-tle lour; See ap-proach proud Ed-ward's power, Chains and sla-ve-rie!
Free-dom's sword will strong-ly draw, Free-man stand or free-man fa', Let him fol-low me!
Ty-rants fall in e-very foe! Li-ber-ty's in e-very blow! Let us do or dee!