

## O Waly Waly (The Water is Wide)

*The water is wide, I cannot get o'er  
**And** neither have I wings to fly  
Give me a boat that will carry two  
And both shall row, my love and I*

*This song works as a round, with the second part starting one line later, at the word in **bold**.  
There is just one clash - on the words 'fly' and 'two'!*

'O Waly Waly' is a folk song of Scottish origin. It was collected by the folk song collector Cecil Sharp in the early 20th century. There are many verses, (of which only the first is shown above) dealing with the ups and downs of being in love. To explore the many different verses and variations of the lyrics, [click here to read more](#).

### 🎵 Starter Activity

- Stretching - starting a warm up with a physical exercise focuses the mind and centres the body.
- 'Switch' is a fun game to encourage focus and critical thinking - it quickly snaps young singers out of 'autopilot!'

### 🎵 Useful Warmup

- The Rhythm Song:  
*Move your \_\_\_ to the rhythm of the music  
Move your \_\_\_ to the rhythm of the music  
Move your \_\_\_ to the rhythm of the music  
That's what rhythm's all about  
[lead with next body part e.g. 'hips!']*
- Use the same rhythms and melody to explore un-voiced sounds (ff, ssh etc) and then voiced sounds (vv, zz)
- Sing the song in lots of different keys, exploring high and low areas in the voice and to keep singers focusing on matching pitch with the singing leader

### 🎵 Teaching Tips

- This song is most successful when sung with a good legato, i.e. very smoothly, so encourage your singers to breathe well at the start of phrases
- The final note of each line is a good opportunity to practise sustaining pitches. When teaching this song, encourage singers to sustain with a supportive hand gesture which keeps moving.
- If you do lead this in a round, be prepared for the clash between the end of the second and third lines.

## 👁️👁️ Things To Look Out For

- The overall melodic shape of each line rises and falls, with the exception of the last line, which is the opposite
- There are song archaic/unusual English words, such as 'o'er' and 'neither'. Help your singers to understand these by giving them the modern English alternatives.

## 👤 Extension Activities / Cross Curricular Links

- This song was originally Scottish. Can you place Scotland on a map, and have you learnt anything else about this country in school?
- 'O Waly Waly' comes from a rich vein of traditional folk songs from the British Isles, can you think of any other folk songs you have sung?
- There are many other verses to this beautiful song. Have a look at the link at the top of this worksheet to explore them all!
- To improve your legato singing, use the 'vv' and 'zzz' sounds from the warm-up and use them to rehearse the melody of this song.

## 🎵 Glossary of Musical Terms

<b>Round</b>	A method of singing the same song with one part starting a line or two later than the first in order to create harmony
<b>Legato</b>	Smooth, connected singing. The opposite of 'staccato'.
<b>Pulse</b>	The basic heartbeat of the music, see also 'beat'
<b>Rhythm</b>	Patterns of long and short sounds. Many rhythms can fit into each beat. Also described as 'how the words go'.
<b>Clash</b>	Two notes which don't sound harmonious when sung together - clashes are still beautiful in their own way!

