

• FIELD TRIP GUIDE •

Planning

- Decide how long your performance will be. Anywhere from 30 minutes to 1 hour is good.
- Pick a date and time (or a few) that will work for your group. (Check school calendars for conflicts.)
- Search for local facilities online or ask colleagues/students if they have relatives in facilities.
- Choose a location that works for your group of students. Travel time may be a deciding factor.
- Call and ask to speak to the activities director. Below is an example starting point for that phone call.

Hi, my name is _____ and I am the choir director at _____ School. I was hoping to bring my choir students to perform for the residents on _____ at _____. Could I please speak to the activities director to see if this would be possible?

- Some things you will want to discuss with the activities director while arranging your visit:
 - Make sure the size of your group is appropriate for the space where they will have you perform.
 - Ask if there is a piano in the space and if it's located where students will be able to see you. If the answer is no to either of those questions, consider bringing your own keyboard or singing a cappella.
 - Check if the facility has any protocols in place for visitors (i.e. wearing masks, signing in, etc.).
- Once you have scheduled a performance date and time make sure your administrator approves the trip. (Some schools you may need to do this step before reaching out to the activities director.)
- Secure chaperones and transportation for approved trip and complete permission slip process.
- Consider teaching students some older songs that they can sing in unison after performing their regular repertoire. This can help lengthen your performance and also give residents a chance to hear songs they recognize. You can also encourage residents to sing along if they want to.

Preparing Students

It is always a good idea to have a conversation with students before performing at a senior living community. Many students will have no prior experience with this kind of setting and will have a more positive experience if they know what to expect and how to respond to different situations.

Consider discussing the following points with your students.

- The purpose of nursing homes/retirement homes/assisted living facilities is to provide care for people, usually older individuals, who can no longer live in their homes.
- Point out that this setting may look, sound or even smell different than what they are used to. If a resident does something unexpected or strange, encourage students to respond with grace and understanding. For example, if a resident walks up closely to the group while they are performing, encourage students to continue singing and not draw attention to the resident. Hopefully a facility staff member will come assist that resident back to their seat.
- While students are encouraged to not draw attention to unexpected situations, make sure they know that if they feel unsafe in a given moment that they have the freedom to move to another spot and remove themselves from that situation if needed.
- Remind students that for each resident, this is their home, so when your group enters the space students should treat it with the same respect they would someone's private home.
- Point out to students that many residents in these kinds of facilities may not get a lot of visitors and never have the opportunity to leave the facility. Remind students that their act of visiting and sharing the powerful gift of music with these residents will mean the world to them.
- Prepare students for the possibility that residents may not be able to fully show their gratitude for the performance due to physical or mental limitations. Don't be discouraged if you don't receive loud rounds of applause or cheers after each song.

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Day of Performance

Before leaving the school

- Make sure all students are present and have their choir folders (if needed). Depending on the length of the performance they may want to bring a water bottle as well.
- Make sure you have your folder and all the necessary equipment if bringing a keyboard.
- Review behavior expectations at the senior living facility, especially entering and exiting quietly.
- Remind students that if something strange or unexpected happens to respond with grace and understanding, and that if they feel unsafe that they have freedom to remove themselves from the situation.

Upon arriving at the facility

- Have students line up in their performance order somewhere outside (weather permitting) so that they can enter the building in an orderly fashion. (This will help with the goal of entering quietly.)
- If the activities director does not come out and meet you, lead the group inside and stop at the front desk, usually located just inside the doors.
- Introduce yourself to the person attending the front desk and let them know that you spoke with the activities director about your group performing on this day. (Hopefully they will be aware of this scheduled performance, but sometimes there is miscommunication.)
- Typically someone will escort you to the space where your group will be performing.
- Once you are all set up in the performance space you are ready to begin!

Performing

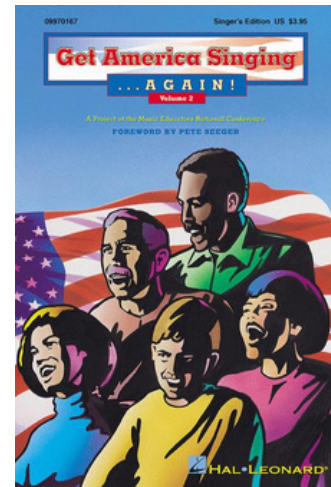
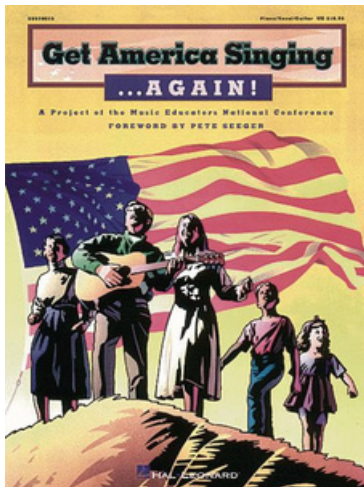
- Before starting your first song, introduce yourself, your group, and where you are from.
- Before or after each song, share the title of the song and if possible give a little bit of background info on the song. If it's a song your students really like, feel free to share that too!
- Engage the audience when you can between songs. This helps the residents feel like they are connecting with the group instead of just listening to the music.
- If you've prepared some sing-a-long songs for the last portion of your performance, be sure to let the audience know they are welcome to join in on any of the songs they recognize.
- Once you have completed your performance, be sure to thank the residents for letting your group come sing for them.

Leaving the facility

- Remind students that as they walk through the building they should do so quietly.
- Have one of the chaperones lead students out of the space, one row at a time.
- Bring up the end of the line, making sure students didn't leave folders or water bottles.
- If possible, thank the activities director for allowing your group to visit.

*Congratulations! You've completed your first performance
at a senior living community!*

• SING ALONG SONG RESOURCES •



Amazing Grace
 America (My Country 'Tis of Thee)
 America The Beautiful
 Battle Hymn Of The Republic
 Blue Skies
 Danny Boy (Londonderry Air)
 De Colores
 Dona Nobis Pacem
 Do-Re-Mi
 Down By The Riverside
 Frère Jacques
 Give My Regards To Broadway
 God Bless America
 God Bless The U.S.A.
 Green Green Grass Of Home
 Havah Nagilah (Let Us Rejoice And Be Happy)
 He's Got The Whole World In His Hands
 Home On The Range
 I've Been Working On The Railroad
 If I Had A Hammer (The Hammer Song)
 Let There Be Peace On Earth
 Lift Ev'ry Voice And Sing
 Michael (Row The Boat Ashore)
 Dona Nobis Pacem
 Music Alone Shall Live
 My Bonnie Lies Over The Ocean
 Oh, What A Beautiful Mornin'
 Oh! Susanna
 Over My Head
 Puff The Magic Dragon
 Rock-A-My Soul
 Sakura
 Shalom Chaverim (Peace, Friend, Until We
 Meet Again)
 She'll Be Comin' 'Round The Mountain
 Shenandoah
 Simple Gifts
 Sometimes I Feel Like A Motherless Child
 Star Spangled Banner, The
 Swing Low, Sweet Chariot
 This Land Is Your Land
 Take Me Out To The Ball Game
 This Little Light Of Mine
 Yesterday
 Zip-A-Dee-Doo-Dah

Kum Ba Yah
 Guantanamo
 I've Got Peace Like A River
 We Shall Overcome
 All Through The Night
 Water Is Wide
 (Oh, My Darling) Clementine
 The Erie Canal
 Every Time I Feel The Spirit
 Five Hundred Miles
 Both Sides Now
 Goodnight, Irene
 I Got Rhythm
 Let It Be
 Let Me Call You Sweetheart
 Over The Rainbow
 Precious Lord, Take My Hand
 Rock Around The Clock
 Take Me Home, Country Roads
 Where Have All The Flowers Gone?
 You Are My Sunshine
 You Are The Sunshine Of My Life
 You've Got A Friend
 Follow The Drinkin' Gourd
 Camptown Races
 The Red River Valley
 Yankee Doodle
 You're A Grand Old Flag
 When The Saints Go Marching In
 Edelweiss
 My Favorite Things
 The Midnight Special
 When Johnny Comes Marching Home
 Jamaica Farewell
 Old Macdonald Had A Farm
 Auld Lang Syne
 I Love The Mountains
 Down In The Valley
 Getting To Know You
 It's A Small World
 Side By Side
 Try To Remember
 Turn! Turn! Turn! (To Everything There Is A
 Season)
 What A Wonderful World
 Make New Friends
 Midnight Special

FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES

Following up your performance with a class activity at your next rehearsal could be a meaningful way to guide students through that experience, helping them acknowledge the impact they made on others, and how the experience may have impacted them as well.

Writing Reflection

Students write a short paragraph about their experience. Have student volunteers read their reflection for the class.

Group Discussion

Discuss the experience in small groups and have group leaders share something from their discussion.

Greeting Cards

Have students create greeting cards to send/drop off at the senior living community.

Plan Next Trip

Invite students to research music from previous generations and make song suggestions for the next visit.