

Lift Every Voice and Sing

Voice Solo ONLY:

Lift ev'ry voice and sing,
Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise,
High as the list'ning skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on 'til victory is won.

NOTE: The original poem is slightly modified in order to portray how our arrangement should be performed

Choir:

Stony the road we trod
Bitter the chastening rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered,
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past,
'Til now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

DA DAHT, O God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who has brought us thus far on the way,
Thou who has by Thy might,
Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
O, Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand,
True to our God,
True to our native land.

Background (as written on pbs.org):

"Many people are surprised to learn that "Lift Every Voice and Sing" was first written as a poem. Created by James Weldon Johnson, it was performed for the first time by 500 school children in celebration of President Lincoln's Birthday on February 12, 1900 in Jacksonville, FL. The poem was set to music by Johnson's brother, John Rosamond Johnson, and soon adopted by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) as its official song. Today "Lift Every Voice and Sing" is one of the most cherished songs of the African American Civil Rights Movement and is often referred to as the Black National Anthem."

<https://www.pbs.org/black-culture/explore/black-authors-spoken-word-poetry/lift-every-voice-and-sing/>