

Song Grove: Spring Awakening

"When we plant trees, we plant the seeds of peace and seeds of hope. We also secure the future for our children." — Wangari Maathai





And When I Rise

Original first verse by Wendy Tuck based on writings of Wendell Berry
Fourth verse by Honey Sweet Harmony; 'zipper' verses added globally through oral tradition

And when I rise (echo), let me rise (echo), like a bird (echo), joyfully (echo)
And when I fall (echo), let me fall (echo), like a leaf (echo), gracefully (echo), without regret (echo)

And when I stand, let me stand, like a tree, strong and tall.
And when I lie, let me lie, like a lake, peacefully, calm and still.

And when I work, let me work, like a bee, wholeheartedly.
And when I play, let me play, like a breeze, fresh and cool, light and clear.

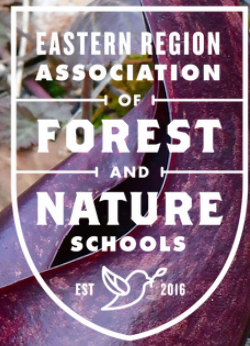
And when I dance, let me dance, like the stars, fearlessly.
And when I sing, let me sing, like the whales, deep and far, wild and free.

Listen: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kbDxcqtTKoo>
<https://soundcloud.com/songforest2/12-when-i-rise>

Roots: First verse was composed by Wendy Tuck in Spencer, WV in 1974 as part of an intentional community dedicated to nonviolent, direct action based on the poem "Like a Leaf" by Wendell Berry. Robin Wilson taught the song to the Federation of Ohio River Co-ops in 1975 or 1976. It is now sung among deep nature connection communities, Threshold Choirs, the Wake Up movement (a group of young mediators in the tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh), and many others.

Activity ideas: A song leader sings each segment following the commas in the above lyrics; the group echoes after them, so this is very easy to introduce to any group. Singing 4 verses can be done facing out to the 4 Directions, which follows a pattern in some indigenous traditions of singing a song in sets of 4.

A 'zipper' song refers to songs that participants can add their own new lyrics/verses. Resounding with intention, these songs work well as opening and/or closing circle songs. Can be sung outwards to different directions (east, south, west, north). Let us know what lyrics you add!



Let Us See the Beauty

By Laurence Cole

Part One:

Let us see the beauty every day
And source our lives from its presence (2x)

Part Two:

I want to know if you can see the beauty
Even when it's not pretty every day
I want to know if you can see the beauty
And source your life from its presence

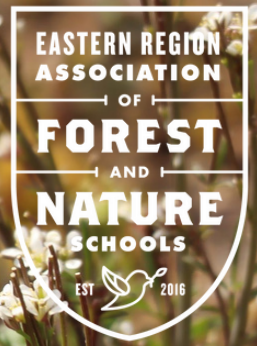
Listen: <http://www.laurencecole.com/album/let-us-see-the-beauty/>

Roots: Lyrics are inspired by a fragment of the poem “The Invitation” by Oriah Mountain Dreamer. Start by teaching Part One to the group, then Part Two. Song can be sung on top of each other, either two groups each with their own part to repeat, or taking turns on opposite parts like a round.

Laurence Cole says, “Many folks have told me how after singing this song they have also found their way to sourcing their lives more intentionally from the immediate beauty at hand, whether inner or outer. This is also a song that is lifted up by little improvisational embellishments. Have fun!”

Learn more at <http://www.laurencecole.com>

Activity ideas: After teaching this song, walk around the land where the program happens, visiting special spots while singing together. After, create a collaborative collage with various elements of nature that children have gathered to express something that gives them a feeling of beauty. Another option is to use a banner-sized piece of paper and write “Let Us See the Beauty” across it. Invite children to draw, paint, or glue nature items to the banner, one for each of the 4 seasons.



Be Open

By Debbie Nargi-Brown

Be open for something wonderful to happen

Be open to the possibility
(repeat both lines)

Aiye Aiye Aiye, Aiye Aiye Aiye

Aiye Aiye Aiye, Aiye Aiye Aiye

Listen: <https://thebirdsings.com/beopen/>

Roots: Learn more at <https://www.debbienargi-brown.com/>

Activity ideas: After teaching this song, take children on a wander in the woods or field, inviting them to find aspects of nature that are “opening.” Create a signal that each can share with a gesture/sound when they find something, and invite others to come observe it together.



Spring is Coming

Melody by Charles L. Minturn (1914), lyrics from unattributed poem

Spring is coming, spring is coming,
Birdies build your nests.
Weave together straw and feather,
Doing each your best.

Spring is coming, spring is coming,
Flowers are coming too.
Crocus, lilies, daffo-dillies,
All are coming through.

Spring is coming, spring is coming,
All around is fair.
Shimmer, quiver, on the river,
Joy is everywhere.

Listen: <https://youtu.be/3sN6PHowGew>

Roots: The original lyrics are a poem published in *A Poetry Book for Boys and Girls* (Cambridge University Press, 1933). This poem and song are now in the public domain.

Activity ideas: Skip in a circle together! Update the lyrics to “Spring is here now!” when appropriate.



Forget Your Perfect Offering

Shared through oral tradition

Forget your perfect offering (echo)
Just ring them bells that still can ring (echo)
There is a crack in everything (echo)
That's how (echo)
The light (echo)
Gets in (don't repeat/echo)
That's how the light gets in (all together)

The birds they sing at break of day (echo)
Start again they seem to say (echo)
The past is gone and wiped away (echo)
I chose (echo)
To sing (echo)
My song (don't repeat/echo)
I choose to sing my song! (all together)

Listen: <https://soundcloud.com/songforest/forget-your-perfect-offering>

Roots: Song is adapted from Leonard Cohen's song "Anthem".
As transmitted through oral tradition, the first 5 lines are done as call (lead singer)
and repeated (by all others) except for unison on the last line.

Activity ideas: This song introduced at the beginning or early in the start of a group/class can help set the tone for a culture of inclusivity through self-acceptance and appreciating others' contributions, whatever their perceived limitations or differences.



De Colores

Canción española / Spanish language folk song

De colores, de colores
Se visten los campos en la primavera.
De colores, de colores
Son los pajaritos que vienen de afuera.
De colores, de colores
Es el arco iris que vemos lucir.

CHORUS:

Y por eso los grandes amores
De muchos colores me gustan a mí.
Y por eso los grandes amores
De muchos colores me gustan a mí.

De colores, de colores
Brillantes y finos se viste la aurora.
De colores, de colores
Son los mil reflejos que el sol atesora.
De colores, de colores
Se viste el diamante que vemos lucir.

CHORUS

Canta el gallo, canta el gallo
Con el quiri, quiri, quiri, quiri, quiri.
La gallina, la gallina
Con el cara, cara, cara, cara, cara.
Los pollitos/polluelos, los pollitos/polluelos
Con el pío, pío, pío, pío, pí.

(continued)



De Colores

Canción española / Spanish language folk song

CHORUS

De colores, de colores/ Sí, de blanco y negro y rojo y azul y castaño.
Son colores, son colores/ De gente que ríe, y estrecha la mano.
Son colores, son colores/ De gente que sabe de la libertad.

CHORUS

In colors, in colors/ The fields are dressed in the spring.
In colors, in colors/ Are the little birds that come from outside.
In colors, in colors/ Is the rainbow that we see shining.

And that is why I love/ The great loves of many colors
And that is why I love/ The great loves of many colors.

In colors, in colors
Yes, in black and white and red and blue and brown.
All the colors, colors
Of people laughing, and shaking hands.
All the colors, colors
of people who know freedom.

Listen: <https://youtu.be/9rn43pLNtIY>

Roots: This is a traditional Spanish language folk song that is well known throughout the Spanish-speaking world. Though the song is associated with Mexican folklore, it is not known when and where it originated. It is believed to have been in circulation throughout the Americas since the 16th century, with melodies brought over from Spain during the colonial era. We've shared some of the most common verses, but there are many variations.

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Learn more at <https://joseluisorozco.com/>



Let the Dandelions Grow

By The Banana Slug String Band

CHORUS:

Let the dandelions grow / With a flowery show
So pollinators know to go / Where the dandelions grow

Every Spring a wondrous thing humming everywhere
Petals bright so pollinators alight and seek the nectar for them there
A mighty good landing site they get a sweet bite
Then take the pollen to the next flower in flight.

CHORUS

Every year when the time gets near to the time it's time to mow
I try to wait and do my yardwork late so those gifts of gold will grow
In a natural state that only time can make
Pollinators know they have a dinner date!

CHORUS

Now if you fear having bees buzzing near please don't worry about that.
This gift you give helps them to live in a bee-friendly habitat
Each bee's a mighty being giving song to the Spring
And sweet summer fruit is what their hard work will bring

(continued)



Let the Dandelions Grow

By The Banana Slug String Band

CHORUS:

Let the dandelions grow / With a flowery show
So pollinators know to go / Where the dandelions grow

So the bees will know to go...where the dandelions grow
The butterflies will know to go...where the dandelions grow
And the beetles they will go...where the dandelions grow
Even lizard likes to go!...where the dandelions grow

Walk out with me and you will know...where the dandelions grow
We'll go barefoot heal to toe...where the dandelions grow
Sit down and watch a show...where the dandelions grow
All in a natural glow...where the dandelions grow
Hummingbirds swoop low...where the dandelions grow
I always try to make some room for the dandelion bloom!

Listen: <https://bananaslugs.bandcamp.com/track/let-the-dandelions-grow>

Roots: Learn more at <https://www.bananaslugstringband.com/>



Give Me Birds at the Dawning

By Betsy Binstock

Give me birds at the dawning
Birds at the dawning
Birds at the dawning
To sing my soul awake

Give me roses/lilacs at sunrise...
Give me breezes at midday...
Give me rainbows at teatime...
Give me flames in the sunset...
Give me candles at twilight...
Give me love in the evening...
Give me moon in the nighttime...
Give me birds at the dawning...

Listen: <https://amidonchoralmusic.com/product/give-me-birds-at-the-dawning/>
<https://mail.riseupandsing.org/songs/give-me-birds-dawning>

Roots: Learn more at <https://mail.riseupandsing.org/artistcomposer/betsy-binstock>

Activity ideas: This is an easy song to learn and harmonize. Could be sung as a 'zipper' song in which children offer their words to go with the different times of day based on what they experience in their local nature neighborhood.



When I was Young

By T'Jen Bishop

When I was young
I was the sun
Shone through the trees
Down to the ground

When I was young
I was the mountain
Knew all the birds
Had my own vision

When I was young
I was the river
Flowed through the mountain
Into the sea

When I was young
I was the ocean
Held all my friends
Throughout the end

I am I am (x4)
We are (x4)

(repeat all verses with "When I was old...")

Listen: <https://beautifulchorus.bandcamp.com/track/when-i-was-young>

Roots: Learn more at <https://www.beautifulchorus.com/>



Sacred Child I Am

By Kate Sutherland

Sacred child I am

Barefoot I walk across the river stones

Water in my blood

And the Earth in my bones

I tend the fire in my heart so I am never alone

Sacred child I am

Listen: <https://katesutherland.ca/track/1786203/sacred-child-i-am>

Roots: Original lyrics are "Sacred Woman I Am" by Kate Sutherland. A recording with children can be found on her "Woodland Dandies" album. Learn more at <https://katesutherland.ca/home>



We are the Ones

Folk song in the public domain, as taught by Ysaye Barnwell

We are the ones are the ones

we've been waiting for

Listen: <https://soundcloud.com/thebirdsings/day-136-we-are-the-ones>

Activity ideas: Invite children to reflect on what seed ideas they want to bring into fruition, anything from a small hands-on project in their home, neighborhood, or school to a big vision for the world. Discuss ways we can go from dreaming ideas, to planning and taking action.