

Lesson 11: Up Above My Head

FOCUS ON

1. Singing and picking by ear
2. Strumming while singing

KEY POINTS

- Echo-sing the melody as written (teacher leads, class follows). This should be done without music.
- Echo-pick the melody as written (also without printed music). Challenge students to pick and sing the melody at the same time.
- In performance, you can lead and have the class follow or you can split the class and have one group of students lead the other (recommended).
- Suggested arrangement:
 - echo-sing a cappella
 - echo-pick melody (with strummed accompaniment)
 - echo-pick improvisation (see comments below)
 - echo-sing with strummed accompaniment
 - tag ending: repeat m. 12–16

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There's lots to do in this lively call-and-response tune; can you **sing and pick your part** at the same time? Can you **sing and strum the chords** at the same time? Can you **sing Uke I and pick Uke II** at the same time?

Up Above My Head Traditional American

Spirited

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ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS & COMMENTS

- *Up Above My Head* is an excellent vehicle for improvisation:
 - Split the class in two.
 - Have one group lightly strum the chord progression (ask an advanced student to stand up front and lead the strummers) and have the other group echo your two-measure improvisations using notes from the G scale. Start simply (i.e. pick rhythmically on a single note).
 - Switch parts and play again, gradually increasing the level of difficulty (e.g. add “blue notes” in the key of G: b ♭ and f ♯).
 - Eventually, ask one or two advanced students to take your place as the lead improviser. Have fun!
- Encourage all students to accompany their singing with a light off-beat strum.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

It is expected that students will:

- echo-sing and echo-pick *Up Above My Head* by ear
- repeat improvised melodies by ear
- strum an off-beat accompaniment while singing with relaxed, supported tone