

BOOK REVIEWS

TUNE IN TO ENGLISH

Uwe Kind

Regents

1980

IF YOU FEEL LIKE SINGING

Alice Osman and Jean McConochie

Longman, New York

1979

FAMOUS BRITISH AND AMERICAN
SONGS

Mario Papa and Giulano Lantorno

Longman, London

1979

SEASONS AND PEOPLE

Roy Kingsbury and Patrick O'Shea

Oxford University Press

1979

The use of music and songs in TEFL has long been advocated, but few books have appeared and fewer have made an attempt to integrate songs into any course. The success of the English Language Teaching Theatre started in London by International House, led to the publication of the record of "Mr Monday", which has since been followed by "English Tea" and "Goodbye Rainbow".

Recently publishers have brought out song books with cassettes that also include supplementary exercises. TUNE IN TO ENGLISH gets the students to complete phrases using rhyme, or order jumbled sentences based on the songs. The exercises practise functions and structures suitable to later Basic or early Intermediate courses. The songs themselves are based on well-known tunes, which makes learning easier, and there are chord indications for anyone who can accompany the class on a guitar or accordeon. The words are somewhat trite in relation to the music, but the transition from singing to speaking, according to the author, helps the student to conserve the natural inflection and pronunciation.

IF YOU FEEL LIKE SINGING is on a more advanced level as it uses the original words of famous songs in combination with reading passages. The idiomatic phrases from the texts are explained in fair detail, with good follow-up exercises. As with the book previously mentioned, there are rhyming exercises with opportunities for the students to invent their own lines. The range of songs is varied while remaining within the folk and traditional area. The analysis on the final pages would be very helpful to a teacher for planning a lesson with the idea of reinforcing items recently taught in other ways.

FAMOUS BRITISH AND AMERICAN SONGS also uses the mixture of reading passages and traditional or folk songs but there are more demands made on the students as there are fewer and more limited notes, and the teacher would have to invent his own follow-up exercises. The introduction, however, does give plenty of guidance in handling and there is a good cross-reference index of structures. The book lends itself to further development of the material in class in the form of discussion themes or projects, and the photographs also give plenty of scope for practice in question and answer work and general communication drills.

SEASONS AND PEOPLE is directed at a lower level with practice of Simple Past, Present Perfect, Present Simple and other structures from the Basic Area. There are straightforward follow-up exercises with each song, the words and music of which are by the authors. (This little book is rather on the lines of 'English Tea' (published by Macmillan), and

"Mr Monday" and "Goodbye Rainbow" (published by Longmans).

For those who would like to use songs in their classes, but fear to make fools of themselves by singing in class, the cassettes that go with these songbooks would seem to be the answer. And as Uwe Kind suggests, even tone deaf students can benefit from rhythmic chanting which will help their acoustic memories to assimilate the sound patterns of English.

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