

# 10 This little light of mine

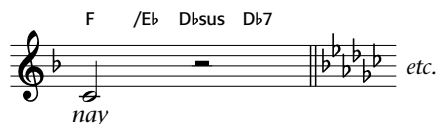
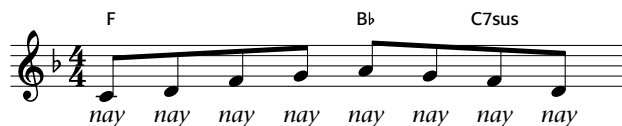
RESOURCES ► CD1 track 10 (performance); CD2 track 12 (backing)

## Information

This well-known American spiritual is a joyful expression of belief in oneself. During the 1950s and 60s it became known throughout the US as a Civil Rights anthem. Here, we set it in a choral gospel style. You can sing this song in unison, parts, or a mixture of both, and it is ideal for a concert performance or worship service. Your singers will pick this up quickly, so focus on creating a big open sound and a confident performance.

## Starting

- Good posture is essential in creating the big sound needed for this piece, so start with some physical warm ups. Use the 'big face, little face' exercise (p. x) to energize the face. Open eyes wide and rub temples, cheeks, nose, and all around the eyes.
- Now tilt your head forward; imagine that the top of your head is a pencil, and on top of that rests a piece of paper. Draw figure of eights on to the paper, side to side, to loosen the neck. Finally, use other stretches (see p. x, 'Posture') to prepare the rest of the body for singing.
- Warm up over the range of this piece by singing the following with a bright, full, energized tone.



- Establish a tempo of ♩ = 152 and have the group click on beats 2 and 4. Sing this drum-kit exercise together to internalize the groove; swing the quavers!



## Teaching and rehearsing

- Singing unaccompanied, use call and response to teach the song phrase by phrase, starting with the melody. Add some claps or clicks on beats 2 and 4, and smile!
- If you are singing the three-part arrangement, move on to Parts 2 and 3 and teach them in the same way.
- For a more authentic sound, keep the sound bright and full but try singing with a slightly nasal tone.

## Ideas

- Ask a soloist to sing 'This little light of mine', or a lyric they have created, and have the group answer with 'I'm gonna let it shine'.
- If you have a confident soloist, they could ad lib. on the long notes. e.g.:



- Along with offbeat clicks or claps, try adding some movement: standing with feet together, step to the right with your right foot on beat 1, and on beat 3 step to the right with your left foot, bringing your feet together. In the next bar, step to the left with your left foot on beat 1, and on beat 3 step to the left with your right foot, bringing your feet together. Start this move in bar 2 and repeat until the tempo change in bar 42. This is known as a 'step-touch' or 'step-together' and is used quite frequently in popular choral styles.

## Listen out

- Take care over the 's' at the end of 'This': concentrate on the vowel.
- If the long notes start to lose energy and focus, try incorporating a slight crescendo.

## Performing

- Perhaps start with a free-tempo unaccompanied verse before beginning the written arrangement.
- You might try the first verse in unison and add parts for the remaining verses.
- This song is all about pride in one's self no matter what. Make sure your singers' posture and faces convey this!

# 10 This little light of mine

Spiritual  
arr. Steve Milloy

Gospel shuffle (♩ = ♪) ♩ = 152

G7 F/C D7 Gm7 C7 F B♭7 F7

Piano *mf*

The piano introduction consists of two staves. The right hand plays a series of chords and moving lines in a 'gospel shuffle' style, while the left hand provides a steady bass line with eighth notes. The tempo is marked as 152 beats per minute.

S. A. *mf*

1. This lit-tle light of mine, I'm gon-na let it shine.  
2. Ev - 'ry - where I go, I'm gon-na let it shine.

Bar. *mf*

The vocal parts (Soprano and Alto) and baritone part are shown. The vocal lines are in the treble clef, and the baritone line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are provided for two different vocal parts. The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern.

*mf*

F B♭7/C F C9sus F C9sus F F7

The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern. The right hand plays chords and moving lines, while the left hand provides a steady bass line. The chords are indicated above the staff.

10

This lit-tle light of mine, I'm gon-na let it shine.  
Ev - 'ry - where I go, I'm gon-na let it shine.

The vocal parts (Soprano and Alto) and baritone part are shown. The lyrics are provided for two different vocal parts. The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern.

B♭ F9sus B♭ F9sus B♭ F

The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic pattern. The right hand plays chords and moving lines, while the left hand provides a steady bass line. The chords are indicated above the staff.

14

This lit-tle light of mine, - I'm gon-na let it shine. Let it shine,  
Ev - 'ry - where I go, — I'm gon-na let it shine. Let it shine,

F B $\flat$ 7/C F B $\flat$ maj6 F/C A7( $\flat$ 9)/C# Dm G9

18

let it shine, let it shine!  
let it shine, let it shine!

F/C D7(#9) Gm7 C7 F7 B $\flat$ 7 1 F7 2 F7 D7sus

22

Je - sus\_ gave it to me, — I'm gon-na let it shine.

C7/D G D9sus G D9sus G G7

26

Je - sus\_ gave it to me, — I'm gon-na let it shine.

C G9sus C G9sus C G

30

Je - sus\_ gave it to me, — I'm gon-na let it shine.

G C7/D G Cmaj6 G/D B7(b9)/D# Em

33

— Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

A9 G/D E7(#9) Am7 D7 Em

37

Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

A7 G/D E7(#9) Am7 D7 Em

**straight 8ths/quavers  
slow down to the end**

41

Let it shine, let it shine,

A7 G/D Em A7

45

let it shine!

D13 C/G