

# Sing For Joy

A Teacher's Guide  
for Elementary Classrooms

## ★ ABOUT THE BOOK

*Sing For Joy* is a story about music, friendship, and community.

Maya wanders how a chorale can be ten years old. Along the way, she discovers that a chorale is more than a group of singers. It is a place where people show up, support one another, and create something beautiful together.



This guide is designed for elementary classrooms and can be adapted for grades K-5.

## ★ THEMES



Belonging



Community



Friendship



Curiosity



Perseverance



Music and Creativity



Celebrating Differences



Joy



## BEFORE READING

Ask students:

1. Have you ever joined a group for the first time?
2. What makes people feel welcome?
3. What kinds of groups are you part of?
4. Can music bring people together? Why?
5. What do you think a chorale is?



## DURING READING

Pause occasionally and ask:

1. Why does Maya ask so many questions?
2. Why does the conductor answer questions with questions?
3. Why do people keep returning every Monday?
4. What makes Harold the cat such a funny character?
5. What does the conductor mean when he says a chorale is a promise?

## ★ DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



### Belonging

- What helps people feel like they belong?
- How can we help someone feel welcome?
- Have you ever helped a new student or friend feel included?



### Community

- The conductor says that a chorale is a promise.
- What promises make a classroom stronger?
- What promises help families and communities grow?



### Joy

- What does "Sing For Joy" mean?
- Can people:
  - Dance for joy?
  - Read for joy?
  - Draw for joy?
  - Help others for joy?
- What activities bring you joy?



## ★ One Last Thought

The story asks:

How can singing be ten years old?

Maybe the answer is this:

Music lasts.  
Friendships last.  
Communities last.  
And joy grows when it is shared.



## ★ ACTIVITIES



### Draw Your Community

Ask students to draw a group where they feel they belong.

Ideas: Family • Classroom • Sports team  
Dance class • Scouting • Neighborhood  
Choir or music class

Afterward, invite students to share:  
"What makes this group special to me?"



### Welcome Poster

Imagine a new student arrives tomorrow.  
Create a poster that says:

"If you show up and want to \_\_\_\_\_  
we'll make a place for you."

Students may choose:

Learn • Sing • Dance • Read  
Draw • Play • Be yourself

Display the posters around the classroom.



### Classroom Chorus

Invite each student to choose a sound:

- Clap • Snap • Hum • Tap a pencil
- Stomp softly • Whisper

One by one, add the sounds together.

Ask: Did one sound make the music?

Or did everyone together create something new?



### Writing Activity If I Joined the Chorale...

Complete these sentences:

If I joined the chorale...

I would...

I would hope...

I would feel...

I would bring...



### Writing Activity Ten Years From Now

Imagine your classroom ten years in the future.

What will people remember?  
What traditions will they talk about?  
What friendships will still matter?  
Draw or write about your ideas.



### Art Activity Draw Harold the Cat.

What kind of singer is Harold?

Would he sing:

- Soprano?
- Alto?
- Tenor?
- Bass?

Or would he just sleep through rehearsals?



### Family Connection

Ask students:

What traditions does your family have?

Do you:

- Sing together?
- Cook together?
- Celebrate holidays?
- Read stories?
- Create or games?

Communities grow when people keep showing up for one another. Families do that, too.



Thank you  
for reading  
Sing For Joy!



We hope it inspires you  
to ask questions, make music,  
and help others feel that  
they belong.

