V'SHINANTAM LEVANECHA: MUSIC AND THE FORMATION OF JEWISH IDENTITY IN CHILDREN

JENNIFER N. RUEBEN

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Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion
Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music
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Thesis Advisor: Dr. Lisa D. Grant

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Introduction

With thoughtful teaching, Jewish identity can be shaped and strengthened in children through music. In my own experience, I have found that much of what children with a religious school upbringing know about Judaism is learned through the songs they are taught. While much Jewish repertoire for children exists, it varies vastly in quality, educational value, and effectiveness. I am interested in discovering methods for writing dynamic and effective music for the purpose of fostering a strong Jewish and spiritual identity in children between the ages of five and ten.

Through various methods, I will examine what makes a song memorable to a young child, how to engage children on multiple sensory levels, what types of messages can be most successfully delivered through music, and how to create childhood musical experiences, especially in a Reform Jewish setting, that are rich in educational and spiritual value. Through research of several prominent educational theories, I will formulate a foundation of knowledge on which to base the writing of children's music. I will conduct interviews with several experts in the field of children's music, including songwriters, cantors, teachers, and secular performers. I will analyze songs that the interviewees and I have found to be effective in order to determine why they work well. From those findings, I will determine techniques and methods of teaching and writing

music that can be used to ensure that the children we teach are comfortable, knowledgeable, and confident in their Judaism. The culmination of this thesis will be the writing of several songs for children using the methods that I discover in the course of my research.

Chapter 1 - Background Research

Background Research

In order to better understand how to create and teach music to children, I have explored several prominent theories of learning and education. Each of these theories focuses on the development of different categories of learning and has informed my interpretation of interview data, my interpretation of musical examples, and the writing of my own music in the final chapter. It is worth noting that while these theories are helpful, they are not steadfast and are open to reinterpretation.

Psychological Theories of Education

There are three different psychological theories which form the basis of different approaches to education (Wadsworth 2004, 2). These theories each suggest different ways that children can be educated.

The Romanticism-Maturationism theory, originated by Jean-Jacques Rousseau, is built around the idea that a child is born with genetically predetermined characteristics which evolve as they grow. Education can serve to maximize that growth, but the direction and traits, which include their abilities and their values, are innate from birth and cannot be changed. Much like a plant, which needs a good environment to grow to its best potential, the environment a child is in can enhance growth, but cannot change

fundamental characteristics. Under this theory, education is passive, serving to support a child as she grows through the developmental stages of childhood rather than to implicitly impart information. Both Sigmund Freud and Maria Montessori subscribed to this theory (Wadsworth 2004, 3).

A contrary theory to maturationism is Cultural Transmission-Behaviorism. This theory views the role of education as to impart bodies of information onto the student. The mind is viewed as a machine which develops only as a result of outside stimuli, and the environment has a great impact on the way that the mind develops. Skills, emotions, and morals are all determined by outside forces. Under this theory, character traits are not innate, but develop as a response to the experience of the child. Genetics have little to do with who the child ultimately becomes. Motivation is primarily external, and the abilities of the teacher and the content of the lesson shape the growth of the child. This is the theory on which much of the American education system is based (Wadsworth 2004, 4).

Progressivism-Cognitive Development is a theory that finds truth in both of the previously described theories. Wadsworth calls this an "interactionist viewpoint." While motivation is internal, outside stimuli contribute greatly to the growth of the child. The child's interactions with the world have great impact on everything from moral development to the development of skills, but children are also born with inherent traits that stimuli can do little to change. According to Wadsworth, "the child is a scientist, an explorer, an inquirer; he or she is critically instrumental in constructing and organizing the world and his or her own development (Wadsworth 2004, 4). This theory is the basis of the work of Jean Piaget.

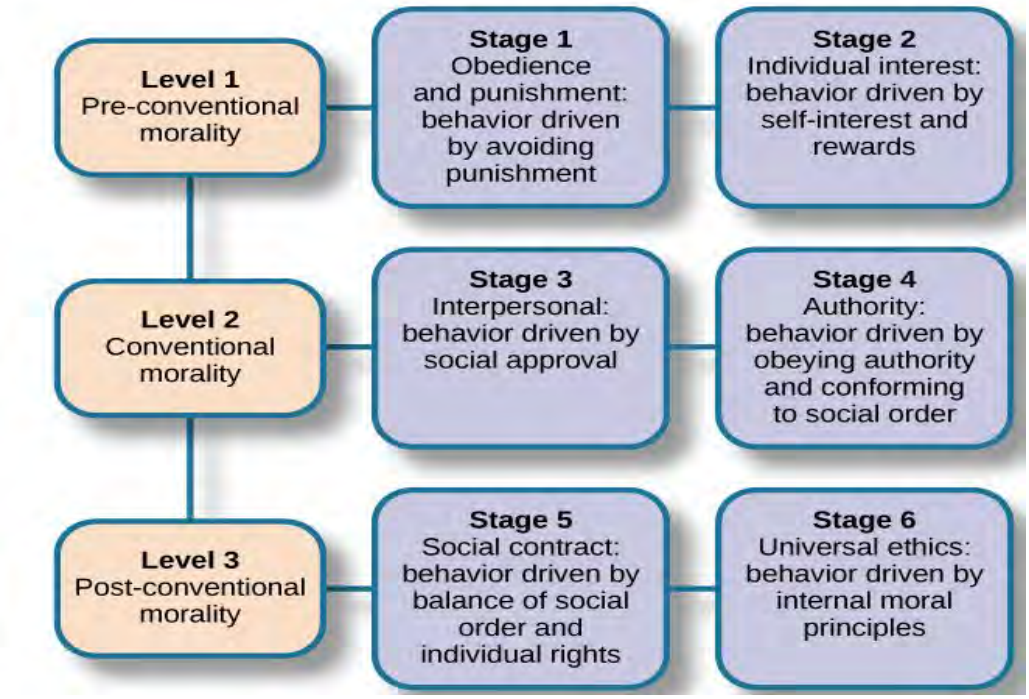
Jean Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development

Jean Piaget outlines four stages of cognitive development which happen from birth to about fifteen years old. All of these stages focus on the relationship between the child and the physical environment. The first stage, which he calls the sensorimotor stage, occurs from birth to two years old. It is the stage at which the child starts to build a concept of reality, figuring out how the world works through interaction with the physical environment. The next stage occurs between ages two and seven. Piaget calls this stage "preoperational," and it is the stage at which children develop both language and intuition. The child is still reliant on the physical in order to learn – she needs to touch things and see things in order for them to make sense. It is in this stage that we first see children develop the ability of deferred imitation (the ability to "imitate behavior long after witnessing it [Pressley and McCormick 2007, 62].") The next stage is the concrete operations stage which occurs between the ages of seven and eleven. This is the stage at which logic really begins to form. Piaget says that at this stage, a child "starts to conceptualize, creating logical structures that explain his or her physical experiences." According to Pressley and McCormick, children at this stage "can apply cognitive operations to problems involving concrete objects, but not to problems involving abstract manipulation or hypothetical situations (Pressley and McCormick 2007, 64)." This is the beginning of abstract problem solving. The final stage, which occurs from age eleven to fifteen, is the formal operations stage. This stage is when conceptual reasoning is

developed. The child will begin to think like an adult. They are capable of "thinking in possibilities" (Pressley and McCormick 2007, 64).

Lawrence Kohlberg's Theory of Moral Development

Lawrence Kohlberg expanded on Piaget's theory in order to explain moral development in children. He came to this theory through a series of studies in which moral dilemmas were presented to subjects. He interpreted their reasoning in finding a solution to these dilemmas, and determined that there are three levels of moral development, each with two stages. He asserted that people move through these stages in order, and that it is not possible to skip a stage in moral development. The following chart illustrates these stages.



[1]

[1] "Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development - Boundless Open Textbook." Boundless. Accessed January 20, 2017.

The first level occurs between birth and nine years of age. While in the Pre-Conventional Morality stage, children's sense of morals is controlled by outside forces. Especially during the first stage of this level, which Kohlberg has deemed Obedience-and-Punishment Orientation, rules and boundaries placed by their caretakers are accepted as absolute. They have not yet developed the awareness to question authority, and so they are shaped by the conventions that they are exposed to. They learn these rules through the reactions of their caretakers when they follow them, and when they break them. As they grow and become aware of their own needs, they enter the second level of this stage, which Kohlberg calls Instrumental Orientation. Children at this stage are developmentally selfish, acting in what they believe to be their own best interest. They look to incentives in order to make decisions as to how to be in the world. They operate by asking, "What's in it for me?"

The second level of Kohlberg's theory of moral development is called Cognitive Morality. During this stage, children begin to think beyond themselves, considering their relationships when making decisions. While they still adhere to rules set forth by the authority figures in their lives, they move from doing so in their own self-interest to doing so in order to preserve their relationships. They begin to become aware of pleasing the people in their lives, and this becomes a motivating factor in their decision making. The first stage within this level has been deemed Good-Boy, Nice-Girl Orientation.

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https://www.boundless.com/psychology/textbooks/boundless-psychology-textbook/human-development-14/theories-of-human-development-70/kohlberg-s-stages-of-moral-development-268-12803/.

During this stage, children are motivated by the avoidance of disapproval of the people they care about. They are aware of expectations and make decisions based on living up to them in order to avoid the negative feeling of disappointing those in authority positions. They strive for social approval. From there, they move on to the second stage of Level 2, which Kohlberg calls Law-And-Order Orientation. While in this stage, a person acts under the belief that rules are universal and applicable to all. They value doing what they are supposed to do. They move beyond acting in the interest of their individual needs and relationships, taking the impact of their actions on society into account. They obey rules out of a sense of fairness as well as the desire to maintain social order. It is Kohlberg's assertion that most people never develop past this stage.

Although children do not typically enter Kohlberg's Postconventional Morality level until after they have reached an age beyond the scope of this thesis, they are worth mentioning because as Jewish educators who are striving to help their learners develop a sense of higher morality, we hope that we might coax children to reach past Conventional Morality. It is only once they reach this level that people begin to question the wisdom and justness of rules and conventions. Rules lose their rigidity and are understood as existing fluidly and being subjective based on the society and people who create and follow them. Rules should benefit the greatest number of people, and those that do not should be reconsidered. This is the stage in which the theory of democratic government is situated.

The highest stage of moral development, which Kohlberg maintained that very few people ever reach, is Universal-Ethical-Principle Orientation. It is only in this stage

that a person develops ethical principles that can be applied universally to all situations. People who have achieved this stage act in accordance with an internally held sense of what is right and just, and they experience guilt when their actions do not align with their inner moral compass.

James Fowler's Stages of Faith Development

Fowler's theory of faith development presents six stages of faith that people move between throughout their lives. This theory is not specific to any religion. Rather, Fowler defines faith as the "universal quality of human meaning making[2]." The basic principles of one's faith may not change throughout their life, but the nature of it does, according to this theory. Fowler describes a process in which movement from one stage to another is based on "a series of progressive growth stages followed by radical upheavals in our faith operations[3]." While an adult can be in any of the stages described, I will refer to children. For the purpose of this thesis, I will only describe the first two stages, as further stages are rarely reached before young adulthood and are beyond the scope of this project.

Beginning around the age of two, children enter the Intuitive-Projective stage. In this stage, physical size or power establish authority. Children are influenced by stories, actions, and examples. Parents are their largest influence – they are a large, physically dominant presence which establishes automatic authority within this stage. Physical size

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[2]Harper, Kate. "Fowler's Stages of Faith." Contemporary Explorations in Psychotherapy. 2013. Accessed January 20, 2017. https://psychology4psychotherapists.files.wordpress.com/.

[3] Harper, Kate. "Fowler's Stages of Faith." Contemporary Explorations in Psychotherapy. 2013. Accessed January 20, 2017. https://psychology4psychotherapists.files.wordpress.com/.

is especially impactful for a child in the Intuitive-Projective stage. The larger a being, the more powerful a force the child perceives it as. This is a critical time in a child's faith development. Fowler reflected, "It is striking how many times in our interviews we find that experiences and images that occur and take form before the child is six have powerful and long-lasting effects on the life of faith both positive and negative."

This is followed by the Mythical-Literal stage. At around the age of six or seven, size and physical dominance becomes secondary to stories and myths in determining a child's beliefs. Stories and symbols are taken literally rather than symbolically. Children are no longer influenced only by their family – other people and even television and media become influential in this stage. Children at this stage easily accept the stories presented to them within their religious communities, and understand them in their most literal sense. Fowler said of this stage, "The gift of this stage is narrative. The child now can really form and re-tell powerful stories that grasp his or her experiences of meaning. There is a quality of literalness about this. The child is not yet ready to step outside the stories and reflect upon their meanings. The child takes symbols and myths at pretty much face value, though they may touch or move him or her at a deeper level.[4]"

Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences

Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences offers a challenge to the notion that a person's intelligence can be measured by one intelligence quotient. Rather, he outlines eight categories of intelligence, suggesting that education that takes as many

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[4]Fowler, James. "The Stages of Faith." Integral Life. April 9, 2009. Accessed January 20, 2017. https://www.integrallife.com/node/40372.

of the factors into account as possible will lead to the most success in education. According to Gardner, “only if we expand and reformulate our view of what counts as human intellect will we be able to devise more appropriate ways of assessing it and more effective ways of educating it (Gardner 1983, 4).

The following chart identifies the eight intelligences with a short summary of what they entail.

Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence	Ability to interpret and produce work involving oral and written language
Logical-Mathematical Intelligence	Ability to develop and solve equations and proofs and make calculations
Visual-Spatial Intelligence	Ability to interpret geographical information
Musical Intelligence	Ability to draw meaning from sound, and to make sound
Naturalistic Intelligence	Ability to interpret information found in the natural world, including identification and distinction of plants, animals, and weather
Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence	Ability to use the body to solve problems and create products
Interpersonal Intelligence	Ability to recognize and understand other people’s motivations, moods, desires, and intentions
Intrapersonal Intelligence	Ability to recognize and understand one’s own motivations, moods, desires, and intentions

According to Gardner’s theory, all children possess all intelligences to varying degrees, but certain intelligences are dominant in each individual. Likewise, most tasks that people undertake require the use of multiple intelligences to complete. As such,

Gardner recommends that a teacher use various entry points into a topic in order to reach students in ways that spark their interest and play to their strengths.[5]

Implications

These theories, though not absolute, can be helpful in determining how to best create and teach music for children. A "typical" child who is five years old is likely in Piaget's Preoperational stage, Kohlberg's Preconventional Morality stage, and Fowler's Intuitive-Projective stage. This would imply that one could best reach him with music including an element of physicality, as they interpret the world through the physical. Imagery such as God being everywhere would speak to a child in this stage, perhaps in combination with large, sweeping movement in order to connect the idea to the physical. He is unlikely to question the ideas they are taught at this age and the stories and teachings he receives during these stages have a large impact on his world view as he grows.

A child who is nine years old has moved into Piaget's Instrumental Orientation stage, Kohlberg's Cognitive Morality, and perhaps Fowler's Mythical-Literal stage. She is beginning to develop the skills to interpret stories slightly beyond the literal. Her motivation is based on a desire to please her caretakers in order that she be perceived as good. She avoids disapproval. It is possible to introduce music with more complex narratives to a child of this age, and to ask the child to begin to draw meaning from the

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[5] Rethinking Intelligence "Reframing the Mind." Education Next. June 28, 2016. Accessed January 22, 2017. http://educationnext.org/reframing-the-mind/.

story or teaching presented. A song with a theme of how to be a good person and outlining the positive consequences of moral behavior would speak to a child of this age, tapping into her desire for approval and to be perceived as good.

Our musical teaching can be made even more effective by taking into account Gardner's Multiple Intelligences. In her book *Teaching in the Key of Life*, Mimi Brodsky Chenfeld often asks the question, "What more can I do?" This question can be a helpful one to ask in determining how to include multiple intelligences in musical teaching. Music has the potential to tap into intelligences that go far beyond the musical. Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence can be supported through movement, logical-mathematical through pattern, interpersonal and intrapersonal through the message within the song and through finding ways to encourage children to interact through music, and verbal-linguistic through the use of lyrics. Considering Gardner's multiple intelligences can help us to reach more children in more meaningful ways.

Fowler, Kohlberg, and Piaget all note the significant impact of things children learn during these early stages. As such, cantors and educators have the opportunity to help shape the cognitive, moral, and faith development of these children by choosing and creating fun musical experiences that take advantage of their openness while not asking them to stretch beyond their developmental understanding of the world.

Chapter 2 - Interviews

Interviews

In order to determine how people in the field are defining success, I conducted a series of telephone and in-person interviews with experts serving in various capacities. I reached out to successful songwriters, cantors and teachers who are using their musical teaching in innovative ways, as well as to two secular performers whose musical teaching had a large impact on me as a child. I asked them to describe their methods of teaching and writing, to reflect on their goals as educators, and to offer insight as to why they are successful and how other teachers and songwriters might incorporate their methods into their own teaching and writing.

Ellen Allard[6]

Ellen Allard is an award-winning recording artist, composer, musician, and educator. She holds a Bachelor of Music Education degree from Boston University and a Masters in Education from Arcadia University. She has recorded 13 albums and released 6 songbooks and spends her time traveling the country to perform concerts, serve as an Artist-in-Residence in synagogues and Jewish community centers, and teach workshops for early childhood professionals.

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[6] "Interview with Ellen Allard." Telephone interview by author. January 12, 2017.

I began by asking Ms. Allard to talk to me about how she teaches a song to a group of children. She answered, “I begin by choosing a song that is developmentally appropriate and fits the need of whatever the situation is in which I am teaching. I am especially aware of not singing down to children. You have to know something about the developmental abilities of the children you’re teaching, especially once children are older. Once they’re older, it’s harder to sell them something that is too pediatric. You want to make sure they will relate to the song.”

“I try to choose songs that have really powerful hooks. The hook is usually in the chorus. If you think of an actual physical hook, it is used to pull something in. Even if the whole song can never be sung by the children because there are too many words, for example, if there’s a good hook, they’re going to be engaged. That’s your goal - to get them engaged in the music.”

I asked Ms. Allard to take me through how she might utilize a song’s hook. She explained, “I will often teach the song in its wholeness, and I’ll ask them if they heard any words that are repeated. I use questions to focus their attention on that hook, and when they figure it out, which should happen immediately, I will do the song again and ask them, for instance, to clap when they hear the hook. They’re engaged from the beginning. It’s almost like figuring out a puzzle, which kids love to do. I’ll then give them a second task, and do it again. They’ve now heard it three times. Maybe the fourth time is the time that I’ll ask them to participate in the singing. You can’t just go in and sing a song and think they’re going to learn it by singing it once or twice. You have to work in a method of engagement in the process.”

As an example of a song with a great hook, Allard pointed to her own composition, *Wonderful Shabbos Sound*[7][8]. She wrote the song for children as young as first grade, and as old as sixth. "There are hooks in both the chorus and the verse of this song. I might just sing the verse and then say, 'How many times do you hear me sing the word Friday?' I'd sing it slowly enough so that they could count. Perhaps the next time, I'd ask them to blink their eyes each time they heard Friday. I modulate my voice to emphasize the word they're listening for. Now that they've heard it again and they're involved in the puzzle, I'd use another tactic - perhaps clapping, or whispering the word Friday with me. You could easily be ten minutes into the teach at this point, and it's a game. I might add movement. I may have them stand up and march when they say Friday, and stop when they are not saying Friday. You can build and scaffold on the learning. Then, once you reach the chorus, you can have them roll their hands. Now you're adding a new element, but they've heard it ten times and they can do it. The overarching principle is to break it down into small components and engage them in ways that help them focus on the important parts."

I asked Ms. Allard to comment on why we should be teaching music to children. She exclaimed, "Why not? It's one of the most engaging ways to build and nurture a sense of community, and to help children feel the oneness, if you will, of life. We are all breathing at the same time, singing the same words, the same melody, the same notes, and we are having fun together. Certainly, from an educational standpoint, there are a

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[7]Allard, Ellen. "Wonderful Shabbos Sound." 80-Z Music, Inc. Sheet music, 2009. http://www.ellenallard.com/product/wonderful-shabbos-sound-sheet-music-shabbat/

[8] See Appendix I

myriad of goals that can be achieved using music. My guiding principle is that it is fun. I have two education degrees, and yet I still come at it from a fun standpoint. If it is not fun, I don't want to do it, and neither do they. That fun can take many forms. It doesn't always have to be jumping around the room. It's about enjoyment. Unless a child has been somehow discouraged, it is always fun to sing. It's one of those inalienable rights that we have. We all come with a voice. We all have the right to express ourselves in this way. It is a part of our uniqueness and our sameness, all at once. What better way is there to elevate both of those things than to empower children to be willing to share and put out their voice?"

Ms. Allard is very interested in creating a sense of spirituality through her music. I asked her how she defines spirituality. For her, it starts with knowing that we are all a part of a bigger whole. She said, "We are one tiny piece in the wheel of life, and I think it builds humility in people when they recognize that it's not all about them. It's about being one part of this grand, vast experiment we call life, in all of its forms, from amoeba to great plants to us. We are all a part of that great big whole. When you look at it from that point, it ties right into social emotional development, which I think is the most important of the areas of development. You want children to participate and cooperate with others. Spirituality is recognizing that it's about the bigger picture. I use singing to help children achieve this. Uniqueness and oneness come together in singing, and that, to me, is the highest spiritual experience. What better way is there to experience both of those things at the same time than to mix our own unique voice with everyone else's?"

The rest of our interview was based upon Ms. Allard's process for writing music, which will be outlined in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

Karina Zilberman[9]

Karina Zilberman is the founder of the 92Y Shababa Network which she established as a family Shabbat experience in the lobby of 92Y in New York City in 2007. 92Y Shababa Network has grown into an educational network for synagogues with a focus on helping them to create "Jewish family experiences with music, play, and soul.[10]" Since its founding, Zilberman has released three CD's of Jewish family music. She has formed groups of musical adults and children, including the Shababa Mamas, the Shababa Abbas, the Shababa Boomers, the Shababa Sparks (children), and the Shababa Nannies. She has now given over leadership of the 92Y Shabbat program to Rebecca Schoffer, 92Y's Director of Jewish Family Engagement. Her involvement now centers around supporting the wider network, which includes over 40 synagogues, day schools, Jewish community centers, and other Jewish organizations.. She travels to these organizations in order to teach cantors, song-leaders, and educators to create family Shabbat experiences of their own. She also provides instruction and mentorship to members of the network through Skype and a yearly summit in New York. Zilberman believes that Jewish life can be a spiritual playground and has made it her life's work to teach the wider Jewish world how to achieve that.

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[9] "Interview with Karina Zilberman." Interview by author. December 23, 2016.
[10] "Shababa ." 92Y - New York, NY. Accessed December 23, 2016. https://www.92y.org/shababa.

I began our interview by asking Ms. Zilberman to describe her philosophy. Zilberman believes that children are inherently spiritual and that adults, despite their best intentions, get in the way by surrounding children with inorganic requirements and expectations. She explained, “I was very intrigued by creating a context and an approach that was beyond pediatric Judaism, where everybody in the room elevates the spirituality that emanates naturally from the kids. It takes into account everyone that is present in the moment, whether it’s the mother or the father or the nanny - anyone in the room. Anything that serves that purpose is welcome. *Kavanah* [intention] is non-negotiable.” The Shababa approach is one in which a song and its leader must be flexible.

Zilberman asserted that children are asking us, as their leaders and caregivers, for intentionality, but that Jewish professionals, in general, are not trained to listen to that need. As such, we tend to provide them with a product rather than the freedom that comes from intentionality. She sees music as one of many available tools to create “magic.” That magic is the connection that is developed between the leader and the child.

“We always say that when you are in touch with that magic - essence, intentionality, you become an enchanter. Enchanting, for us, is what we believe leaders need to be connected with. You could be singing the most amazing song with no wonder or enchantment and it will come into one ear and leave the other. A song without an experience is just a song. A song serving an experience becomes a memory. We are building memories with the kids.” She does not dictate what that memory will be - it could be whatever is on the heart of the child in the moment the song is sung. “The

moment a song leaves your body, it is gone - you have no idea what that song will do when it reaches people."

Sometimes, though, a song isn't working. The Shababa approach includes a philosophy that one should never risk the dynamic of a group for the sake of a song. If the dynamic created by the song is not working, Zilberman will immediately leave the song and go on to something new. Zilberman stated, "The song must be as flexible as the need of the community in the moment." She believes this is what children love about the music of Shababa.

Zilberman defined spirituality as, "the deep connection to what is true to oneself. It's the deep connection with our soul, with our *neshama*, with our essence." I then asked her to talk about how we can help children reach that. She adamantly proclaimed that we adults tend to surround children with requirements and expectations that are inorganic, and that get in the way of a spiritual experience. She believes that spirituality happens when those inorganic requirements are removed and the child is allowed to meet the moment with the truth of who they are. She considers things such as overt instructions and prescribed choreography to be inorganic.

She continued, saying: "Through this approach, I have found that music is very much connected to Martin Buber's I-Thou theory. There's the me, and the you, and the space in between us that has a life of its own. Songs can nurture that space, or can contaminate that space. So, if you can make songs that can create bridges between the I and the Thou, then the space is taken care of."

I turned our conversation toward the composition of music for children. Zilberman was insistent that children's music is not just for children, but for families. If the adults do not enjoy the music, and participate, and love it, it will not be music that stays on the child's heart forever. She believes less is more, and simpler and bolder is better. She also believes strongly in recycling material given to us by children. She commissioned a song called, *"Bye Bye, Yuckies"* that is a healing song for families. (I will detail this composition in Chapter 4.) The writer, Dave Matkowsky, incorporated words that were spoken to Zilberman by children in order to communicate to them in language that they connected to, and it has become one of the cornerstone Shababa pieces.

According to Zilberman, successful music for children is all about creating a musical playground rather than a playpen. Music should not be instructional. It should not attempt to create limits. Children and leaders should have the freedom to play within the music. She loves zipper songs, which allow her audience to bring themselves and their own experience into the moment. I asked her what some components of a successful songs might be, to which she responded, "Simple, repetitive, catchy, and profound." She sees songs as stories, and she believes that songs should be written with sweetness and an eye toward building community. She warned of the perils of having an agenda or being instructional when writing music. To Zilberman, music should serve a moment rather than a purpose. She said, "Music should say something that people otherwise would not say."

We turned our conversation to techniques of presentation. She spoke in broad terms, which were very much in line with her aversion to giving instructions. She taught me that the Shababa approach is all about creating moments. As such, she often extracts moments of existing songs to aid in that goal. A video of a February CD release concert included an excerpt of Doug Cotler's *Listen* before they sang *Sh'ma*. The lyrics are as follows[11]:

> If you're lost, you feel afraid
> And you don't know what to say
> Then listen, listen to your God

Zilberman said of this moment, "Doug Cotler authorized us to use what we have used here. *Kavanah* is non-negotiable. If I had to sing the whole song for such young children, it would not work. By immersing this moment in the magical context of the *Sh'ma* moment, it works for my audience. It's about the *kavanah*. [The use of this extracted phrase] gives me the freedom to adapt to the spiritual moment."

Zilberman then spoke about the importance of trust, which she sees as the responsibility of the leader and not of the audience. She instructed me to, "trust people before they trust you. Put your faith in them. Just be real, be mindful. Greet people at the door. Be grateful that they are there. You have no idea what people are going through.

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[11] Shababa of the Heart: Concert and CD Release Party with Karina Zilberman and Rebecca Schoffer. February 03, 2016. Accessed December 24, 2016. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cv3iOLrxfM4.

Kids are there to sing with you - be grateful! Don't rush. Take your time. Less is more. And they are smart!"

Cantor Yakov Hadash[12]

Cantor Yakov Hadash is the lower school music teacher at David Posnack Jewish Day School in Davie, Florida. The school is pluralistic with ritual practice is based in Orthodox Judaism. He is also the cantor at Congregation Shaarei Kodesh in Boca Raton, FL. Cantor Hadash was trained and invested at Jewish Theological Seminary. At the day school, which was the focus of our conversation, he is responsible for teaching general and *tefilah* music for kindergarten through sixth grade.

Cantor Hadash's approach is much different from others profiled thus far. Part of this stems out of teaching in an Orthodox-based school. His goals are to teach children musical skills, synagogue skills, and Israeli culture. As such, he must be much more explicitly instructional than Zilberman in her Shababa approach. Like Zilberman, he focuses on teaching values through music. However, his methods are very different.

Cantor Hadash is responsible for teaching traditional synagogue repertoire to children. It is through his classes that they learn classics like *Avinu Malkeinu* and *Maoz Tzur.* He focuses on their melodies and their intentions. He stressed that he does not teach the literal meaning of the words because, in his view, they don't matter. According to

[12] "Interview with Cantor Yakov Hadash." Telephone interview by author. December 22, 2016.

Cantor Hadash, these songs are about the tradition of their sound and not so much about their literal meaning.

At his school, Cantor Hadash leads the *tefilah* for his students. He stated that he never specifically teaches them the music - he trusts that they will learn it by the repetition of being in *tefilah*. As such, he almost never changes the melodies that are used in his services. There are melodies that he uses that have been used in every prayer service for 50 years. He asserted that the children really enjoy the repetition. It gives them ownership of the service to know what is coming. One of his main goals is to ensure that children master the liturgy of *tefilah* so that they are able to successfully pray in the synagogue. After a year of praying several times per week in the synagogue, the children leave as skilled daveners.

Cantor Hadash is the only representative of liberal Judaism that the children are exposed to in school, and so he feels he has a unique responsibility to bring some of the values of liberal Judaism to his students. One way that he does this is by embracing diverse genres of music in his classroom. Every week, he chooses a country and shows his students music videos from that country in order to expose them to music outside of what he described as their "bubble." He explained, "Most of these kids are only exposed to white upper middle class people like themselves, plus Israelis. The outside is a blur." He makes the exploration of diversity a priority in service of the idea of *v'ahavta l're'echa chamocha* (loving your neighbor as yourself). He uses these videos not only to expose them to diverse cultures but to teach children that no matter what you look like or where you come from, you have value. His students are fascinated with these videos and

he believes that they are internalizing this message. I am struck by this technique - in synagogues, we rarely have children listen to music, but with the plethora of music available to educators and cantors, it could be a valuable tool to add to our educational repertoire.

Especially with his youngest students, Cantor Hadash uses games in order to capture and hold their interest. He said, “Almost everything I do is a game. I even give them points based not on their performance, but on their behavior. When they are helpful or nice, they get a point, and when they are mean, I take one away. They can trade in these points for fun musical experiences.” The musical learning is also immersed in games. This taps into the natural competitive nature of children to help motivate them to engage.

When choosing music to teach children for the purpose of singing, Cantor Hadash is very aware of rhythm. He finds rhythm to be a factor that can make or break a child’s experience with a song. Rhythm is the element that provides structure. When the rhythm of a song is inconsistent or weak, he finds that the children are less likely to engage in it. He said, “If you want children to sing the same thing at the same time, they have to understand the rhythmic structure they are working within.” As such, he chooses songs with steady, well-defined rhythm. As children get older, they are able to handle more complex rhythms, but even so, the songs his students respond best to are the ones that have simple, sound rhythmic structure.

While much of the available research cautions against the use of syncopation with young children, Cantor Hadash has not found that this is practical in his practice. “People

who don't formally know music understand syncopation, maybe even better than someone who is formally trained." He surmised that the reason children so successfully and enthusiastically learn syncopated rhythm is because they hear so much of it in their lives. Pop music is full of it, and as such, he believes they have internalized it.

Cantor Hadash has written a large body of music for use in his classroom. Usually, he writes in response to need. He finds that there are many subjects and ideas around which no suitable children's music has been written. He finds song to be a valuable vehicle for transmitting information to children. As such, many of his songs are lists. He has written a song that lists the commandments, one for the books of the Torah and another that humorously lists all of the Torah portions, He finds rhyme to be extremely helpful in aiding children's memory. Much like strong and steady rhythm, rhyme gives a lyric structure, which children thrive well within.

Cantor Hadash uses his writing as an opportunity to have children sing in diverse genres, which is important to him. His Torah portion song is a rap, which is a medium that he uses frequently and with much success. "Rap is a vehicle for fitting a lot of words into a small amount of time. Pitch can be a distraction, and rap is a great way to get that distraction out of the way." It allows children to engage in music without feeling like they are singing. He uses this with his older students more than younger ones and he reports that they love it.

Shira Kline[13]

Shira Kline, who is also known as ShirLaLa, is a renowned Jewish performer and music educator based in New York, NY. She travels the country and the world, performing her innovative "kiddie rock," leading worship, and delivering innovative programming for children and adults as an artist-in-residence. She has recorded three CD's of "outrageously hip Jewish kiddie rock." Kline is on faculty at Hava Nashira Songleading Workshop and at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion's Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music Cantorial Certification Program, where she teaches a course in music education. She has also trained extensively in the art of Storahtelling with Amichai Lau-Levi and Peter Pitzele, and was a founding member of Lab/Shul[14].

I asked Kline to begin by telling me how she began working with children. She began her career as a musician for adults and was hired to fill in for a music teacher at 92Y. She was singing Old McDonald with the children and she messed up the words. "I suddenly could not think of animals that belonged on a farm, and so I sang, "And on that farm there was an elephant.' The children were tickled. They were delighted. Their eyes lit up. So I asked them what sound an elephant makes. Their arms went up, their faces went in their armpits, and they were hysterical. Their humor was incredible." She said that it was the first time that she experienced the magic of the humor of children, and that

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[13] "Interview with Shira Kline." Skype interview by author. January 15, 2017.
[14] "About Shira Kline." Shirlala. Accessed January 15, 2017. http://shirlala.com/about-shira.

she was hooked. That sense of fun, of unabashed play, and of joy has informed everything she has done in her career since.

Kline is fascinated by the imagery of a garden. This is a constant theme in both her recording and her teaching, and she sees a garden as the ultimate spiritual playground. She described the opening ritual of a typical program aimed at children from tots through early elementary. She opens by inviting them to come into the garden without explaining what she means by this. She taps into what she calls their "boundless imagination" and asks them to enter this imaginary garden, and they follow her without reservation. She asks the parents to be the gateway, and they use their bodies or hold a tallit to create a passageway through which the children enter. From there, she asks the children to retrieve their parents or nannies, encouraging them by asking, "When is the last time you got to enter a secret garden?" She then invites the children and adults to dance in the garden together. This leads into *Bar'chu*. Utilizing alliteration with the letter B/ב, she announces to the children that *Bar'chu* is for bouncing, it is a blessing about the body, and they are going to bend. She then slows the music down dramatically, having the children bend all the way to the ground, and then stretch up to the heavens. Then, they bounce again.

Kline explained, "Music with young children is like little steps on a journey. One phrase can be done, blossom, and go to a completely new place. This leads to another place, and then another." Her method of teaching music relies deeply on imagination, which requires flexibility. One never knows where a child's imagination will take them. She has had to learn to be patient and open, and to give herself over completely to the

imaginations of the children in her presence. “I am completely dedicated to self-expression. It is my number one priority. I want to create a safe space for kids to express themselves. You just have to be in the vibe with the kids,” she said. “It informs you where to go, and which choice to make in a given moment.” As such, she rarely uses a song in its original form from beginning to end. For Kline, each song, and each phrase, must be used in service of the current moment, and as such, when the moment changes, the music often must as well. She says that the key to success in her imaginative method is “a large repertoire and a never-ending imagination.”

I asked Kline about her role as the *sh’lichat tzibbur* in the service she was describing. She said, “My job is to put gates around the garden and then proceed to grow the most luscious, incredible garden possible with everyone on equal ground. I am the gardener. I try to use the native language of play. It’s what children understand and relate to best.” I asked her how she grows this garden. She replied, “My methodology involves deep listening, paying attention, and never separating from them. I can’t be distracted or led by them. If I allow myself to go there, I can get lost.” She said she avoids this by listening and leading. If children know that she is listening to them and she is with them, they will follow her lead. “I also utilize patterns, like the B thing with *Bar’chu*. This helps to provide some structure. It is a way of creating boundaries.”

In order to understand her methods a little better, I asked Kline to describe another such moment. She told me that she finds a million stories inside *Sh’ma*. For Kline, any quiet moment is a *Sh’ma* moment. Before the moment of *Sh’ma* in the *tefilah* she described, she has adapted a teaching from Craig Taubman. Taubman’s teaching

breaks the word *sh'ma* into three sounds - *shh, mmm,* and *ahh*. In Kline's version, she asks the children to make a *shh* sound, and then asks them if they can hear the wind in the garden. After allowing them to play within that, she moves on to *mmm,* which she describes as the singing of a mountain. She may tell them that it takes a special kind of listening to hear the singing of the mountain, and then she will invite them to try to hear it. Again, she allows them the space and time to play within that imagery. From there, they arrive at *ahh*, which she describes as the light bursting into the universe. The children are given time to play within that sound. From there, they sing *Sh'ma Yisrael*, perhaps Solomon Sulzer's melody. Kline's intention is to make the play lead seamlessly in and out of the music. She stressed that she never does one of these moments the same way twice because there are always different children present, bringing different imagination to the experience. She described this as a spiritual challenge, and one that she meets with excitement and flexibility.

Although Kline has composed some music, she does not consider herself a composer. Rather, she hears music and recognizes creative ways to mold it and form it into something that is useful and serves the moment she is trying to create. Of creating original arrangements of other composers' songs, she said, "Ellen Allard taught me the concept of 'what else can I do?' That's what leads to an arrangement. I ask myself, "Why am I doing it? What needs to happen here to make the moment I need?" She gave the example of Doug Cotler's *Thank You, God.* She explained that she has never used the verses of the song, but that she loves to use the chorus, which is a very simple blessing of gratitude. She also has never used the lyrics he originally intended, preferring to open the

floor to the children to add in the things for which they are grateful. She stated that it doesn't matter what crazy words the children want to insert because there is room for gratitude for all things. She described the moment that this song can create as "magical." The children are empowered to create their own moment, and as such, any kind of emotion can spring from it, from deep gratitude to playfulness to zany humor, and all of it serves the energy and desires of the children. She added, "This is how I feel I really need to use the song. This is the only way - to do what you must do, in the moment."

Speaking specifically of Shabbat, and her intentions in creating this experience, Kline said, "I want to go beyond challah and candles. I want to encourage children to bring everything they are into the synagogue. I want the rabbis involved, and I want the children to have a delicious relationship with their clergy. I want them to play, to stretch their imaginations, to meditate, and to experience intensive prayer. Mostly, I want them to form positive associations with Judaism and the synagogue, period. Whatever it takes to get there, it's all good."

At the end of our interview, I asked Kline if there was any more advice she could give me. She responded, "Just be constantly generous. Give everything you can."

Cantor Lisa Segal[15]

Cantor Lisa Segal is the cantor at Temple Beth Sholom in Miami Beach, FL. She oversees the musical teaching in the religious school, creating and implementing

[15] "Interview with Lisa Segal." Telephone interview by author. December 20, 2016.

curriculum from children from kindergarten through grade 10. She also teaches music and leads tefilah in their thriving preschool program.

Cantor Segal sees her role within a children's service as the same as in an adult service in one very important way - she is there to pray. She sees herself as a model. She wants the children to see her pray in a way that is authentic and not performative. Although this isn't always possible due to scheduling, she tries to carve out time before a service in order to prepare herself to pray, and she considers this preparation an important aspect of creating effective children's *tefilah*. She stressed that without adults in their lives modeling prayer, children will not value it in their own lives.

According to Cantor Segal, familiarity and consistency are key to successfully using music with preschoolers. Her preschool students are at their happiest and most comfortable with things they know, and they are excited to display their knowledge with participation. Cantor Segal leads a pre-school musical *tefilah* service on Friday mornings. It is full of participatory music with varying goals. She uses music to create excitement around the idea of Shabbat, to teach Shabbat *minhagim*, to introduce ideas of God and holiness, and to teach them to recognize sacred space. This is also the time she uses to introduce music that is specific to *chagim*.

When children (of any age) enter the sanctuary, they are offered the opportunity to wear a kippah in order to designate the time and space as sacred. Cantor Segal explained that this helps them to mark that this time and space are different and important, and that this is the beginning of creating a sense of spirituality and holiness within the service.

With her preschoolers, Cantor Segal chooses music that is extremely participatory. She finds songs that incorporate movement to be especially effective, as well as zipper songs that invite children to help craft the content of the song. These things not only help to engage young children, but they encourage them to think independently and take ownership of their experience.

Cantor Segal uses the music of Ellen and Peter Allard often in her services. She is fond of the song *God Is In…*, which has a pop-style backbeat and leaves space for children to explore the concept of God by identifying places where they find God. She incorporates the children's suggestions into the song no matter how outlandish they may be in order to emphasize that God can be found anywhere. Another favorite of her students is Ellen Allard's *I'm So Glad That Shabbos Is Here*. This song teaches the joy of Shabbat through movement. It invites children to clap their hands, stomp their feet, nod their heads, and move in other ways in celebration of Shabbat. This is a forward-cumulative song, adding a new movement each time a verse is added. She asks individual children to contribute a movement to be incorporated. Her preschoolers find joy in songs that incorporate easy singing with movement. Cantor Segal stressed that one of the most important goals to achieve when working with children, no matter their age, is that they love their time in the synagogue. She believes this is a vital goal to achieve in order that children will stay engaged with synagogue life beyond the time of their bar or bat mitzvah.

The opening of Cantor Segal's preschool services are mostly musical and non-liturgical, and they build toward the Shabbat brachot (candles, wine, and challah).

She finds that preschoolers love these *brachot* because they involve tactile stimulation in combination with bits of Hebrew that they are able to master. As such, the blessings have become the high point of her service. Her students are especially fond of the *Motzi* blessing, and have developed their own tradition of yelling it as loudly as they can. Though this might not be in keeping with the intrinsic meaning of the prayer, Cantor Segal finds that this *minhag* has value in its fun, in the ownership the children take of it, and in the community that they feel when they do it. She emphasized the power in the traditions that children create themselves, and noted that she finds that few things create the feeling of a holy community more than honoring the *minhagim* created by the children.

Cantor Segal described her religious school services as a "mishmash," incorporating both traditional and contemporary liturgical music. Along with the goals of building community, experiencing holiness, and teaching children to relate to God, her religious school services are meant to teach children synagogue skills. She wants her students to be able to pray comfortably in the synagogue, and so familiarity with the words and themes of the liturgy are taught within their *tefilah* services.

In this interview, we focused on Cantor Segal's musical choices for her weekly *tefilah* for grades 3-6. I asked her to describe some songs that she finds to be the most effective for her older children. She described the practice she uses for *Sh'ma*, which she considers to be particularly successful. The children stand and sing Jeff Klepper's *Open Up Our Eyes*, which is a *kavanah* based on *Ahavah Rabah*. She starts this moment at a whisper and builds to full voice. She then transitions into Solomon Sulzer's *Sh'ma*, which

is the high point of the sequence. At this point, the children know to be seated. In the same key, she chants the first line of *V'ahavta* in order that the children be exposed to the sound of the trope, and then she transitions directly into Julie Silver's English rendition of *V'ahavta*. I asked her what works about this sequence, and what makes it a holy moment in the service. She pointed out several things that make it successful. First, she noted that she has worked hard on the transitions in order that it be seamless. She has placed all of the music in complementary keys so that it all flows continuously. She stressed that any interruption in the flow of the music breaks the moment. The build from a whisper to full voice in the opening *kavanah* creates momentum toward *Sh'ma*, which she considers to be the peak of the arc of the sequence. She noted that moving from the English of *Open Up Our Eyes* into the Hebrew of *Sh'ma* adds to the building feeling of holiness, as children find meaning in the idea that Hebrew is the language of prayer. The words of *Open Up Our Eyes* offer a teaching of the meaning of *Sh'ma* ("We will know that we are one[16]"), helping them to understand the words they are praying. The return to an English melody with *V'ahavta* bookends the sequence in words they understand.

While most of the content of her service is musical, Cantor Segal finds it essential to also include discussion in the service to provide an opportunity to delve deeper into the content of the service. According to Cantor Segal, these discussions help to build a trusting rapport with the children which increases their willingness to participate throughout the service. It also allows for deeper learning, which in turn enhances their

[16] Klepper, Jeff. *The Complete Jewish Songbook: Shireinu*. Edited by Joel N. Eglash. Compiled by Erik S. Komar. New York, NY: Transcontinental Music Publications: 263.

ability to delve deeper into prayer. Topics of discussion are wide-ranging, but often focus on relationship to God.

Cantor Segal views children's music in her synagogue as a "prayground," combining playfulness and prayer in a way that allows children to both use their imaginations and tap into their spirituality. Her ultimate goal is to give children an experience that is deep, enjoyable, and seeped in Jewish tradition and learning.

Cantor Daniel Singer[17]

Cantor Daniel Singer is the Senior Cantor at Stephen Wise Free Synagogue in New York, NY. A graduate of Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion's Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music, Cantor Singer previously served at Temple Shaaray Tefila in Manhattan, Congregation Beit Simchat Torah in Manhattan, Brooklyn Heights Synagogue, Temple Adas Israel of Sag Harbor, and Temple Beth El of Bloomfield Hills, Michigan. Alongside Assistant Rabbi Samantha Natov, Cantor Singer is responsible for implementing innovative programming for children in their religious school and through various creative initiatives. Cantor Singer is also a talented composer. He writes original songs both to serve this programming and for a wider audience.

I began this interview by asking Cantor Singer about his process for writing music for children. He replied, "I usually write for a purpose, to fill in holes. For instance, I realized that there really was no good *K'dusha* for kids, so I wrote one. I included the Sulzer responses in the context of something more contemporary. I like to embed a little

[17] "Interview with Cantor Daniel Singer." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2016.

bit of nusach in children's music. I also recently wrote something for a Torah dedication. It involved the religious school and the nursery school. It was based on trope, and it has rhythmic and participatory sections. It's based in tradition. Just because it's nusach does not mean it has to be inaccessible. Nusach needs to be revised in the context of the contemporary ear, which is attuned to hearing music with a beat. It's nusach, but more metrical. Children are used to pop music. Tradition needs to be modified to match what is familiar to them. Children's music shouldn't be too pediatric. They appreciate more sophisticated music. Nusach fulfills that for them, and when you place it over a rock beat, it lends familiar rhythm to the sounds."

Cantor Singer described four categories under which he tends to write. They are nusach/cantillation, storytelling, introducing musical concepts, and using instruments. These are all areas in which he feels there are gaps in the available repertoire. He sees instruments as metaphors for Shabbat - the sounds they make can elicit many of the themes of Shabbat in ways that children can connect to. He wrote a song which he teaches by giving each child two sticks to represent candlesticks. Within the context of the song, they pretend to light their candles. They explore the sound of fire. The song encourages them to visualize the flickering lights. They click their candlesticks high and low and all around. The melody is bluesy, and it is meant to bring a tactile experience to Shabbat.

Another song by the name of *Shake It Up On Shabbat* utilizes egg shakers. It is important to Cantor Singer to introduce musical instruments to children in the context of Shabbat in order to prepare them for their eventual move to the SWFS adult service,

which utilizes a professional synagogue band. Much of the music he writes is for this purpose.

Cantor Singer said, “In writing music, you can’t always tell by instinct what is going to work. You have to try it out in context. It’s a creative experiment. Try. Don’t be afraid to fail. You can’t predict what children are going to take to.”

I asked Cantor Singer what tends to work well for his students. He emphasized that movement is important in children’s music. On this topic, he said, “Kids love using their bodies. We lose that as we get older. We get more sedentary. We want to be lulled into Shabbat. Kids have more energy - they need to release it. *Shake It Up on Shabbat* is the beginning of a sequence we use. We call it the happy dance section. We let the kids have a dance party. We don’t tell them to do anything, and we do this right at the beginning. It gets their energy out. We use visceral, physical songs to allow that energy to be expelled so that we can get more spiritual and meditative later.” In both his writing and his teaching of music, he utilizes all sorts of motion, from hand motions to line dancing to sign language. He often tries to find movements that help them bridge the gap between the music and the words.

For Cantor Singer, rhythm is an element of great importance in his writing and his teaching. “Rhythm is what controls the room. Music, rather than words, control the room. They are extremely responsive to music. Finger picking on the guitar immediately calms them down. When I start strumming, they immediately get up and start dancing. Stopping suddenly gets their attention. They’re so receptive to music, and so you can control the

room based on pacing. It's the same way we pace chazzanut - it works the same way with children."

I asked Cantor Singer to describe some of his teaching techniques. He stressed that one must engage all of the senses and all types of learning. His advice was, "Stay light on your feet. Be willing to be flexible. Have personality. And be willing to address changing interests of the student body."

Sharon Hampson and Bram Morrison[18]

Sharon Hampson and Bram Morrison were members of Sharon, Lois & Bram, a Canadian family musical trio hailing from Toronto. Together with Lois Lilienstein, who died in 2015, these award-winning recording artists sold more than 3 million albums in a career that spanned 36 years. They were the stars of two television series directed at early childhood audiences: Sharon, Lois & Bram's Elephant Show and Skinnamarink TV. They produced 17 recordings, three songbooks, and various compilations and have performed at major concert halls all over Canada and the United States. The two still perform together today, bringing their legacy of family fun to new audiences[19].

One of my earliest memories is of lying in bed with my little sister watching Sharon, Lois & Bram's Elephant Show. We had the chicken pox, but that did not stop us from delighting in the wholesome music and sweet stories of this TV show. As I listened

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[18] "Interview with Sharon Hampson and Bram Morrison." Telephone interview by author. December 27, 2016.
[19] "Bio." Sharon and Bram. Accessed December 23, 2016. http://www.sharonandbram.com/bio.htm.

to their music in preparation to interview them, I realized that I have many powerful memories that are linked to their music. I attribute my early and deep love of music with their show and their recordings. I wanted to learn how it was that they created such an impactful music experience and how that might be translated into a synagogue setting.

Hampson and Morrison did not write their own music, but were deeply involved in selecting music for their television shows and their recordings. I asked them about this process. They emphatically insisted that the key to their success was to only choose music that they genuinely loved. Morrison said, “Children deserve the very best of everything - food, experiences, entertainment, and certainly music. There is no substitute for quality.” They chose songs that they found musically fulfilling. They took great care in ensuring that the music was orchestrated and harmonized in ways that were satisfying to them as sophisticated musicians, and they found that the more they loved a piece of music, the more it resonated with their audiences. Their music is full of intricate harmonies. When working with a band, they wanted each instrument to have a unique and important voice. Hampson added, “We wanted our music to be enjoyable for adults as well as children, because we see music as a family experience. If the parents couldn’t stand it, we knew that the children would not have the access to it that we wanted them to have. Music is a powerful tool for creating family memories.” They identified the creation of these memories as one of their ultimate goals for their concerts, their recordings, and their television shows.

In studying their music, I was struck by how carefully arranged, orchestrated, and harmonized their music was. A compilation of music from their shows and concerts that

is available on YouTube[20] featured one of their signature songs, *Peanut Butter and Jelly*. In this rendition, they were backed up by a seven-piece band, and each piece was featured prominently at moments during the song. The vocal harmonies were layered in barbershop style, and were carefully added and taken away for emphasis and dramatic effect. There were moments built in in which they directed the audience of children and their adult parents and caretakers to take the lead. They included choreographed movement which the audience mirrored. The three used their voices theatrically at times and with more seriousness at others. Much of the music in the 1.5 hour compilation is equally intricate, with extreme attention to detail and thoughtful inclusion of the young audience. The quality music of which they spoke was evident throughout the video, which spanned their years on the Elephant Show. Children in the audience were captivated. This music was as meticulous and intricate as most any music directed toward adults. They attribute their success to this attention to detail, and it was clear from studying this survey of their work and observing their audiences that it achieved the goal of engaging both the children and their families.

Hampson and Morrison never chose music based on teaching. Hampson said, "We always let the teaching come organically. We did not want to preach to children." Most of their television shows included ample teaching on themes ranging from letters of the alphabet to making use of a rainy day to comforting a frightened friend (or, in the case of one episode, a frightened elephant stuck in a tree), to the importance of honesty

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[20] Hampson, Sharon , Bram Morrison, and Lois Lilienstein. The Elephant Show - Skinnamarink and Famous Songs. April 30, 2015. Accessed December 24, 2016. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nREI97CMxb0.

and friendship. However, the music was not chosen to service these themes. Rather, storyline was woven around the music in order to create teaching.

Sharon, Lois & Bram's Elephant Show utilized music in two contexts. Nearly every show included a scripted portion in which the trio carried out a musical adventure with a group of children, as well as live concert footage. I was especially interested in learning about their concerts. These concerts had audiences full of children and parents and were designed to be highly participatory. Much like the musical teaching that Jewish professionals undertake, Sharon, Lois & Bram were standing in front of a group of children creating an experience that incorporated both familiar and unfamiliar music. Children enthusiastically sang along with them. I asked them what elements contributed to the success of these concerts. They emphasized the importance of programming with an arc in mind. They would "warm up" their audience with familiar music, playing some popular favorites first. It was only after creating trust through familiarity that they were able to ask their young audiences to take the risk of learning newer and more complicated music. Morrison pointed out that once they had sung a few simple favorites together, children could easily be coaxed to do do things that were much more complicated, such as singing in rounds. "You have to build to harder things," he said. "Even young children are capable of doing musically complicated things, but you have to build trust first."

I was especially struck by their success at giving instructions within the context of their songs. When I asked them about this, Morrison gave the following advice. "Don't ever talk down to children. Speak to them on their level, but with the same respect with which you would speak to any adult." In watching their work, I noticed their tone of

voice. They spoke to adults and children in the same tone most of the time. The words they spoke were chosen in a way that was considerate of their age, but they spoke to the children in the show in the same tone with which they spoke to me during this interview.

I asked Hampson and Morrison whether spirituality played a role in their music, and at first, they said that it did not. They then asked me about how I defined spirituality. My own working definition includes the knowledge we are but a small part of a greater whole and the power that exists in recognizing that. Under that definition, they both agreed that there was, in fact, a spiritual element to their music. Hampson pointed out that music reaches people in a unique and powerful way, and that though they had never considered it such, that power could be defined as spiritual.

Findings

Each of the professionals I interviewed offered some unique insight into how one might expand and improve their teaching and writing of music for children. While these educators work in different capacities and have varying styles of teaching, there were commonalities in their philosophies and their methods. I drew upon these commonalities to develop 8 core principles for creating Jewish children's music that is dynamic and effective.

Enjoyment

All of the educators I interviewed expressed the necessity of fun in teaching music to children. In order to capture the hearts of children, the musical experience must

be enjoyable, supportive, and positive. This does not mean that music for children must be silly, but rather, that it needs to be accessible and make them feel something. When a child is has fun while singing, it creates positive associations with the Jewish experience. Fun music is memorable music.

Simplicity

Another common theme in all of the interviews was that songs for children should be simple enough in melody, rhythm, and message to be accessible to the target audience. Cumbersome words, intricate and rangy melodies, and complicated rhythm create barriers between the song and the child and can create stress that discourages participation.

Quality

Bram Morrison and Sharon Hampson insisted that children deserve the highest quality in their music, and this was a theme that was echoed by many of the interviewees. Care should be taken in making sure that the music we are teaching and writing for children is music that we, as listeners and educators, can also enjoy. Zilberman pointed out that if she doesn't love a song she is teaching, the children know instinctively and they reflect back her opinion of the piece.

Hook

Ellen Allard spoke at length about the power of a catchy, easy hook. It creates an entry point into the song and serves as an anchor each time it returns. This is important when the goal is to have all of the children participate. Each of the songs I studied by all of the composers I interviewed as well as each of the songs I will present in the subsequent chapters has a powerful hook, and this is a part of what invites children in, captures their hearts, and makes the song memorable.

Repetition

The use of repetition and patterns is a priority for all of the educators that I interviewed. This helps children to know what to expect, increasing the likelihood that they will participate. Even the most difficult task becomes easier with repetition. As a child grows more familiar with a melody, they no longer have to think about it in order to sing it, allowing them to concentrate on the message. Patterns and repetition lend structure to a song, making it more predictable and encouraging children to engage with it. Repetition can be utilized in the words, the melody, and the rhythm within a song, and most of the music I studied utilized most or all of these.

Movement

Cantor Daniel Singer pointed out that movement helps to bridge the gap between the music and the words. All of the educators I interviewed are proponents of the use of movement with music, and this is backed up by the theories of Piaget, Gardner, and Kohlberg. Movement adds an element of fun, promotes creativity, and makes use of the

child's often ample energy. When the movement is connected to the words, it can also increase understanding.

Creativity

Without exception, each interviewee expressed that music that allows children to be creative within it is the music that works best for children. When they are allowed to add their own creativity to a song, whether through the words, melody, or movement, they take ownership of it, leading them to internalize the messages within it. Children are inherently creative, and children's music should tap into those creative abilities.

Putting the "Playground" Into Practice

I was especially struck by Karina Zilberman's insistence that music should be a playground rather than a playpen. When a song allows children to use their own imagination, they take ownership of it and it becomes an experience rather than just a teaching tool. Shira Kline's idea of inviting children into an imaginary garden is a beautiful example of putting this notion into practice. In my own synagogue, I try to employ this technique often and find that it engages children in a way that it is hard to do with simple call-and-response musical teaching. Ellen Allard's music lends itself to this. With these ideas in mind, I recently taught her song *Standing at the Sea*, but instead of using the words she composed, I turned it into a zipper song. I asked my students to imagine that they were standing at the sea with Pharaoh's army coming up behind them. They already knew the story of Nachshon's first step into the sea, and so beginning there,

I had them call out what they might be seeing and experiencing as they crossed the sea and arrived at the other side, and we zipped their ideas into Allard's melody. They organically developed their own movements for each new verse. We sang the verse, with an occasional return to the chorus, for ten minutes, until we reached the end of the story. The children were engaged and excited by this teaching. By engaging their sense of play and imagination, we simulated the experience of crossing through the parted sea rather than just narrating the story. Each child was a part of crafting the experience. I believe this is what Zilberman was referring to when she talked about a playground as opposed to a playpen, what Kline was referring to when she talked about deep listening and sparking imagination, and what Allard was referring to when she spoke of combining each student's unique voice.

Chapter 3 - Music and the Formation of a Strong Jewish Identity

Music and the Formation of a Strong Jewish Identity

Jewish identity is a complicated notion. The debate around the definition of Jewish identity has come to prominence in the past few decades[21]. We live in a time when we have great control over how we identify ourselves. We are mobile in many different ways - geographically, socially, and economically. We are not bound to an identity by nature of being born into it. Perhaps more than ever before, modern Jews identify themselves in a multitude of ways, based on varying things such as ethnicity, religion, nationality, interest, politics, and many other factors. Identity is fluid and ever-changing, and as such, exceedingly difficult to define.

A Pew study released in 2013 identified eight factors that could be considered in determining Jewish identity and polled both American and Israeli Jews on the importance of these factors when considering what it means to be Jewish. For the purposes of this thesis, I will focus on the findings for American Jews. The eight identified factors and the percentage of respondents who considered them a factor in their Jewish identity are as follows:

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[21]Cohen, Erik H. "Jewish identity research: A state of the art." *International Journal of Jewish Education Research*, no. 1 (February 2010): 7-48.

What Does It Mean To Be Jewish?

% saying __ is an essential part of what being Jewish means to them	NET Jewish %
Remembering Holocaust	73
Leading ethical/moral life	69
Working for justice/equality	56
Being intellectually curious	49
Caring about Israel	43
Having good sense of humor	42
Being part of a Jewish community	28
Observing Jewish law	19
Eating traditional Jewish foods	14

Source: Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of U.S. Jews, Feb. 20-June 13, 2013.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

[22]

From these responses, it can be concluded that ethics, history, religion, culture, and relationship to Israel all play a role in the American view of Jewish identity, to varying degrees. It is notable that respondents found ethical and cultural factors to be far more prominent than religious and communal ones in this poll. According to Leonard Saxe, Brandeis Professor of Contemporary Jewish Studies and Social Policy, the Pew study shows that American Jews, while numerous, are "not highly engaged in Jewish life and with formal Jewish organizations." As such, he concludes that the challenge for the

[22] Joseph Liu, "A Portrait of Jewish Americans," Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project, October 01, 2013, , accessed January 17, 2017, http://www.pewforum.org/2013/10/01/jewish-american-beliefs-attitudes-culture-survey/.

American Jewish community is determining how to "sustain identification and engagement with Judaism, both as a religious movement and as a culture.[23]"

Recently, there has been much debate over what constitutes Jewish identity, and whether Jewish identity may be a concept that is too ambiguous to justify naming it as a goal of Jewish education. Jon Levisohn of Brandeis University states that, "For some, the problem with talking about Jewish identity is that it's hard to measure. For others, the problem is the very idea of a single, unified Jewish identity; actually, we all inhabit multiple identities, these days more than ever.[24]" This concern led to a conference in March of 2013 on the topic of Rethinking Jewish Identity and Jewish Education, which he organized with Ari Kelman of Stanford University. This conference wrestled with Jewish identity as a concept, and whether it was a worthy goal of Jewish education. In reflecting on this conference, Levisohn concluded, "It still makes perfect sense to talk about Jewish identity in terms of how a person thinks about who she or he is in the world. How do I understand myself? Whom do I understand myself to be? What story do I tell myself about myself?[25]"

In a position paper submitted to the Jim Joseph Foundation, Rabbi David Ellenson outlined what he views as the goals of Jewish education.

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[23]Saxe, Leonard. ""Take-Aways" from the Pew Research Center's "A Portrait of Jewish Americans"." Synagogue Council of Massachusetts. Accessed January 17, 2017. https://www.synagoguecouncil.org/sites/default/files/uploaded_documents/pew.take-aways.saxe_.111213.pdf.

[24]Levisohn, Jon. "What I've Learned About Jewish Identity." EJewish Philanthropy Your Jewish Philanthropy Resource. May 29, 2014. Accessed January 17, 2017. http://ejewishphilanthropy.com/what-ive-learned-about-jewish-identity/.

[25] Ibid.

> "The true goals of Jewish education are thus deep and broad. For individual Jews, education provides access to the rich resources of the Tradition. These resources can add meaning to their lives and help them answer life's most challenging questions. Beyond the personal dimension, the goal of Jewish education is enculturation — connecting individuals to the community's way of life, to timeless Jewish values, and to the ongoing experience of the Jewish people, past, present and future. Finally, Jewish education must also be generative — inspiring Jews to create and support vibrant Jewish communities that sustain Jewish life, help repair a broken world, and insure the future of the Jewish people. Thus, the goals of Jewish education include both the cultivation of individual Jewish identity and the building of strong, palpable communities, in which Jewish values and aspirations are affirmed and enacted. Only in these ways can meaningful "Jewish continuity" be assured.[26]"

Rabbi Ellenson enthusiastically affirmed the need for a focus on Jewish identity formation in the context of education in the Reform synagogue and made a case for why this is an important focus. It is his position that a focus on Jewish identity formation is essential to ensure Jewish continuity and to create communities that support Jewish values.

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[26] The Future of Jewish Education from a Reform Perspective - David Ellenson Ellenson, Rabbi David, Ph.D. *The Future of Jewish Education from the Reform Perspective*. Jim Joseph Foundation. January 31, 2012. Accessed January 17, 2017. http://jimjosephfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/Rabbi-David-Ellenson-Ph.D..pdf.

In determining factors of Jewish identity formation that could be addressed with young children through music, I have taken into account both the questions posed by Jon Levisohn and the educational goals set forth by Rabbi Ellenson. This is not an exhaustive list of identity factors, but rather one that takes into account developmental appropriateness as well as the potential of music to be used to strengthen a child's understanding. It is also reflective of the goals stated by interviewees. For each concept, I will analyze music which I believe presents the concept effectively.

Jewish History

A sense of our history as Jews is one of the most important elements that make up Jewish identity. It is the thing that gives us context for why we practice the way we do. In every prayer service, we recall our patriarchs and matriarchs and we remember the exodus from Egypt. We are collectively impacted by past persecutions. Our history is documented through our text, our stories, our traditions, our liturgy, and sound. This historical memory binds us together as a people and is an integral part of who we are as Jews.

The stories of Judaism can be made memorable and accessible to children through music. A vast library of songs have been written that articulate parts of our Jewish story, and these songs are invaluable tools in passing on our history to the next generation. Biblical stories are especially well represented in the Jewish children's repertoire, and these stories, with their colorful imagery, make excellent subject matter for children's music. The use of rhyme and repetition help make these stories memorable and accessible

to young children. In Jeff Klepper's song "Abraham[27][28]," which is suitable for children beginning around grade 2, three vignettes from the Abraham story are presented. They are highly simplified, making them appropriate as an introduction to this important figure in our tradition for young children. Let us take it verse by verse.

The first verse's lyrics are as follows:

> Years ago in our history
> At the very start of our family tree
> The Lord called out to Abraham
> And that's how the Jewish people began

Paired with simple rhythms and a catchy melody with a limited range, this verse teaches the concept that Abraham was called by God, and that this was the start of our story as a people. It also suggests that the Jewish people are a family to which the child belongs. This helps children to understand their relationship to the Jewish people in terms they can understand. They already comprehend the concept of being a part of a family. By suggesting that Abraham, too, is a part of their extended family, it helps them to feel connected to the story.

The song continues with a chorus that is based around Genesis 12:1, in which God instructs Abraham to "*lech l'cha*."

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[27]Klepper, Jeff, and Jeff Salkin. *Manginot: The Complete Jewish Songbook for Children, Volume II*. Edited by J. Mark Dunn, Joel N. Eglash, and Cantor Alane S. Katzew. New York, NY: Transcontinental Music Publications, 2004: 3.
[28] See Appendix A

Abraham: the very first Jew

God wants to have a talk with you

“It’s time for you to leave your land,”

And he listened to the Lord’s command

Klepper packs a lot into these few words. Through this chorus, children learn that Abraham was our first ancestor, that God spoke to him, that he was commanded to leave his land, and that Abraham listened to God. The use of rhyme helps aid memory. The language is simple and relatable. God’s voice doesn’t thunder down from the sky. Instead, God has a talk with Abraham, just as a parent might have a talk with the child. This treatment of the conversation between God and Abraham conveys gravity on a level that a young child can easily grasp. When a parent tells a child they want to have a talk with them, it signifies that something important must be discussed. As such, this conveys an importance to the conversation between God and Abraham.

The next two stories that are presented are the destruction of Sodom and Gemorrah and the binding of Isaac. These are two of our tradition’s most difficult stories to comprehend, even for an adult. I am struck by how Klepper is able to boil these stories down to their essence without losing their integrity. While omitting many details, he presents elements of the story that convey the big idea and are comprehensible for young children.

God said, “I know of a wicked town,

And now I am going to strike them down.”

Abraham said, “It’s not right to do,

You’ll destroy all the innocent people there, too!”

God told Abraham to slay his son

But a voice said, “Stop!” before the deed was done

He looked in the thicket and found a ram

And God gave a blessing to Abraham

These verses present two rather violent stories in ways that do not shy away from their grit, but the focus is on the positive. Both focus on conversations that Abraham has with God, which creates thematic cohesion. Both of these verses could be the basis for conversations with young children about what it means to do the right thing, which Kohlberg’s theory would suggest is a ripe topic for children in grades 2-6.. The third verse could be used to start a conversation about the meaning of blessing. After teaching this song, I might ask my students how they talk to God, and how God talks to them, encouraging them to relate this story to their own experience. Klepper’s treatment of this difficult subject matter is a powerful example of how music can make a story accessible and relatable to a young child without talking down to them. This song presents vignettes from our history in a way that is respectful of both the text and the needs of the young children we teach.

Understanding of Liturgy

Liturgy is one of the elements of Judaism that binds us together. No matter which synagogue one enters, core elements of the liturgy are consistent. Jews in every corner of the world say *Sh'ma Yisrael*. Knowledge of Jewish liturgy can be one of the most important elements in the formation of a strong Jewish identity.

Traditionally, most of our prayers are sung. Whether davened in traditional nusach or sung to new melodies, words and music are inextricably bound together in Jewish tradition. Musical settings of prayers can be taught to children from infancy. The right musical setting of a prayer can help children to understand it on a multitude of levels. In addition, music can be an aid in the learning of the Hebrew.

Careful setting of the text into melody and rhythm makes it much easier for children to pronounce Hebrew words. Settings in which the Hebrew words fit with the stress and cadence of the music help children toward correct pronunciation. An example of a prayer set in a way that is true to the text is Laura Berkson's *Yotzeir Or*[29][30]. The melody and rhythm make for Hebrew in which every word falls in a stress pattern that is close to how a native speaker may speak the words. As such, the children come away from learning this simple song with a clear understanding of the way that the Hebrew sounds when spoken. Settings such as these can be valuable tools in helping children to

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[29] Berkson, Laura. *The Complete Book of Jewish Rounds*. New York, NY: Transcontinental Music Publications, 2002: 69.
[30] See Appendix J

become comfortable with the Hebrew of the siddur which adds to feeling at home in the synagogue. Settings such as these can useful tools in helping children to take ownership of the Hebrew of the siddur.

Understanding the meaning of the liturgy is another important element in helping children to pray. I have found, and many of those I interviewed agreed, that musical settings which include both the Hebrew text and some explanation of meaning in the children's native language are especially effective in teaching the meaning of prayers. Once children learn a setting like this, they are able to recall the English teaching within the song whenever they come across a Hebrew instance of the prayer.

Josh Nelson has written a setting of *Mi Chamocha*[31] that is an example of combining Hebrew and English to increase understanding. The melody is simple enough to be effective with children of most any age, and the English teaching captures the essence of the prayer. It begins with a contemplative setting of the text, "*Mi chamocha ba'eilim Adonai? Mi kamocha nedar bakodesh? Nora tehilot, oseh feleh*." Much like Berkson's "Yotzeir Or," the Hebrew is well-set, with careful attention to correct stress in both rhythm and melody. It is followed by a poetic translation of the first line of text. With soaring melody conveying wonder, it asks, "Who is like you, Adonai?" I am especially moved by the way the melody is set to sound like a question, cadencing upward as inquiring speech does. I find it less important to convey the meaning of each word of the text than I do for children to understand the essence of what they are saying, and this setting gifts that to them. I taught this setting to my religious school students.

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[31] Nelson, Josh. *Ruach 5771 Songbook: Social Action*. Edited by Jason Rodovsky and Michael Boxer. New York, NY: Transcontinental Music Publications, 2011.

After we sang it regularly for a number of months, I taught a new, all-Hebrew setting of the prayer. When I ask them what they are singing about, their response is always, "Who is like you, God?" Nelson's setting taught them the essence, which they now own no matter how they are expressing the text.

The tradition of nusach, which has been passed down through the generations, is another important element in understanding Jewish liturgy. Nusach, which translates directly to "text" or "version," has come to mean the sound system by which we traditionally articulate our prayers. There are various nusach traditions. Reform synagogues tend toward the German Ashkenazi system. Traditionally, nusach is unaccompanied, but this is no longer the case in many Reform synagogues. Nusach is a system in which different modes (scales) are used to articulate time, both within the day and within the year. We can tell where we are in the calendar by the sounds that are heard in the synagogue. Although Reform cantors no longer rely on this system as they once did, elements of it are present within the typical Reform service. Nusach can be made accessible for children. No matter what synagogue they enter, they are likely to hear some nusach. Cantor Daniel Singer of Stephen Wise Free Synagogue in New York, NY is especially fond of teaching children *chatimot* that they may hear in prayer services no matter where they go. He pointed out to me that one of the largest barriers between children and nusach is its fluid rhythm. As such, he sets nusach rhythmically to teach to children. This helps them to be able to join in and know when to sing. He finds the use of guitar helpful in this. Although it isn't exactly identical to what he uses while davening, he finds that teaching them to be familiar with the scales and melodies means that once

they find themselves in a service not geared directly to children, they are able to make the leap and recognize that these are melodies and sounds that they already know. He expressed that this familiarity with little bits of nusach are important in helping children to feel at home in an adult service[32].

Knowledge of Jewish Tradition/Customs

Our customs are some of the most powerful tools we have to create Jewish connections for children. Whether lighting the Shabbat candles, listening to the sounds of the shofar, or tasting the foods of the Pesach seder, children are fascinated and delighted by the actions of Judaism. Our customs, whether commanded or created, are almost always done in the presence of either family or community. They offer us the opportunity to create memories. Our customs offer a visual and interactive manifestation of Judaism. Music is inherent in many of these rituals, and can play a powerful role both in teaching the logistics of a custom and in infusing it with meaning.

The tradition of hearing the shofar calls over the High Holidays is one that many children love. Ellen and Peter Allard's *Shofar Blast*[3334] is one of the most effective teaching songs that I have ever used, and I consider it an invaluable tool in teaching children of all ages what the calls of the shofar sound like. By knowing the sound of the

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[32] "Interview with Cantor Daniel Singer." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2016.
[33] Allard, Ellen. "Shofar Blast." 80-Z Music, Inc. Sheet music, 2003. http://www.ellenallard.com/product/shofar-blast-sheet-music/
[34] See Appendix H

different calls, the children take deep ownership in this ritual. The song's lyrics are simple.

Chorus:

I like to hear the shofar blast

Sometimes slow and sometimes fast

I like to hear the shofar blast

Happy, happy, happy new year

T'kiah!

Sh'varim!

T'ruah!

T'kiah g'dolah!

This song is brilliant in its simplicity. It is an echo song, which means that the children repeat after the leader. It begins with a catchy, fun chorus which associates the shofar with the new year. Each shofar call is melodically set to mimic the sound that the call requires of the shofar, teaching children what each call sounds like. The verses are backwards and cumulative, meaning that a new one is added, and then all previous verses are repeated before landing on the chorus. The final *t'kiah g'dolah* is held for as long as the children (or leader) are able. This song is a favorite of children in my own synagogue. It has sparked much conversation about what each sound of the shofar evokes, and it

creates excitement about the tradition itself. Children love the opportunity to sing the different shofar sounds and as a result of knowing this song, they are well versed in how each one sounds. It has encouraged them to take ownership over the blowing of the shofar and it is something they look forward to every year, not only because they love the sound, but because they are given the opportunity to display their knowledge.

In my own synagogue, the children and I have created a new tradition that came out of asking the question, "What more can I do?" We now end the song by repeating the word "happy" over and over again in the last chorus, which we call the "happy *g'dolah*." This helps the children to draw a connection between the long blast of the shofar and a joyful new year. The children feel invested in the song because they helped shape the tradition around it.

Jewish Spirituality/Connection to God

Psalm 104:33 says, "I will sing unto God as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have any being." Psychologist Lisa Miller, who has written extensively on the topic of children and spirituality, defines spirituality as "[...]an inner sense of relationship to a higher power that is loving and guiding (Miller 2015, 108)." No matter what we call that higher power, she states that spirituality "encompasses our relationship and dialogue with this higher presence (Miller 2015, 353)" As cantors and Jewish educators, we have the opportunity to enter into and encourage this dialogue with the children we are guiding. Our sacred texts show us that God hears our singing. There is a holiness in the act of lifting one's voice. Children know this by instinct.

Karina Zilberman of the 92Y's Shababa Network defines spirituality as a deep connection with the truth of ourselves[35]. She explained that we surround children with inorganic requirements, and that they can tap into their spiritual selves most effectively when they don't have to deal with the pressure of an expectation. Words can be such an expectation, getting in the way of spiritual imagination. As such, Zilberman is a proponent of niggunim for children. By letting go of words, we can create a space that is not contaminated by the expectation of saying the right words. Children begin life by making sounds, not words. Wordless sounds have meaning to young children. A rhythm, a beat, and a sound can have meaning without words. A niggun can be an invitation into joy, a blanket of comfort, and a spiritual playground. It allows the child to determine their own *kavanah*, which gives them the freedom necessary for spiritual connection.

Words need not always get in the way of a spiritual experience. Though it is an imperfect tool, we use language to try to understand God on our terms. Music can serve to illustrate those words, adding layers of meaning. Ellen Allard's beautiful song, *Holy, Holiness*[3637] is an example of how we can use music and words to help children connect with the divine. The lyrics are below.

All around, everywhere

All around, everywhere

Holy, holiness

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[35] "Interview with Karina Zilberman." Interview by author. December 23, 2016.
[36] Allard, Ellen. "Holy Holiness." 80-Z Music, Inc. Sheet music, 2000. http://www.ellenallard.com/product/holy-holiness/
[37] See Appendix E

In the highest sky, in the deepest sea…

In my heart, in your soul…

Every step, every breath…

As with me, so with you…

This song attempts to answer the question, “Where do we find holiness?” Holiness is hard to define, but children find it easy to experience. It suggests places we might find holiness. There is ample repetition in the song. The cantor/educator suggests where one might find holiness, and then the lyric is immediately repeated, allowing children to join in, culminating in “holy, holiness.” When teaching this song, I have found it meaningful to allow children to create their own lyrics. I ask, “Where is holiness?” I then create spontaneous lyrics out of their answers, allowing them to take ownership in the concepts.

Melodically, this song is of limited range and ample repetition. It is rhythmically extremely simple. As such, it is singable by very young children. Both the rhythm and the melody evoke calmness, suggesting reverence to the moment that is being created together. Conceptually, the song is both simple and profound, making it appropriate for a wide range of ages. I had the privilege of watching Ms. Allard teach this song to a group

of older children whom she had just met. She gave no instruction - rather, she just began to sing, prompting them with a nod to join her. They knew exactly what to do. The combination of lyric and melody brought an immediate calm to the room. There was clear separation from the moments before, and this separateness indeed felt holy.

Connection to Community/Sense of Belonging

Lisa Miller states, "To feel your voice resonate in a chorus of voices, to feel held or uplifted, inspired, soothed or healed with and through others who care about you: this is the unique gift of a spiritual community (Miller 2015, 2956)." Karina Zilberman, creator of The Shababa Network, is a strong believer in the power of songs to help build community through a shared experience[38]. Zilberman has built her entire program around creating a sacred community in which children are the focus, but all in attendance are valued and fully engaged. Children and adults alike crave this feeling of connection and community, and cantors and music educators can use music to create these experiences. Songs about connection, and about loving and valuing each other, have great suggestive power. Jews have used singing to build community for generations. Immersing a congregation in melody and encouraging them to join their voices together creates a shared experience. Zilberman and her team write music with this purpose in mind.

In her song "Because I Love You So Much[39]," Zilberman presents the concept of *ahava*, or love, in three languages. The verses are as follows:

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[38] "Interview with Karina Zilberman." Interview by author. December 23, 2016.

[39] Zilberman, Karina, and Rebecca Schoffer. *92Y Presents: Shababa Of The Heart*. 2016, CD.

Because I love you so much

Because I love you so much, so much, so much

Because I love you so much

With all my heart

Eh-ah-ah, eh-ah-eh, oh-eh

Porque te quiero tanto

Porque te quiero tanto, tanto, tanto

Porque te quiero tanto

Con todo mi corazón

Eh-ah-ah, eh-ah-eh, oh-eh

Ki anu ohavim hamon

Ki anu ohavim hamon, hamon, hamon

Ki anu ohavim hamon

Im lev shalem

Eh-ah-ah, eh-ah-eh, oh-eh

This song packs a lot of community building into a few lyrics. Zilberman often opens and closes with this song, bookending her services and concerts with love. The infectious pop tune is easily singable and encourages clapping and dancing. The message

of the song is simple, but important - loving each other. It encourages a feeling of bonding and love between the leader and the group, between children and parents, and amongst the children themselves. A universal theme is suggested through the use of multiple languages. Spanish is both Zilberman's native language and the language spoken by many of the caretakers of the children in 92Y's Shababa program, and so it was included in the spirit of making all feel welcomed. Beginning with this song helps create a space in which a child feels supported. Ideally, children are introduced to the concept of love from the moment they come into the world, and it is a language they speak fluently without words. Whether or not the child is able to join in the words, they are invited in through the melody, through the rhythm, and especially through the syllables that close each verse. Melodically, each verse is the same. It begins in English, which is the native language for most of Zilberman's audiences. The sameness in the melody suggests without overtly saying that each verse has the same meaning, and so children understand the Spanish and the Hebrew without being told what they mean. The song is a communal expression of love. When sung in community, each person present is both a giver and a receiver of love, and the result is both empowerment and bonding.

Another excellent example of a community building song for children is Mikey Pauker's "Hinei Ma Tov[40]." The lyrics are as follows:

Chorus:

[40]Pauker, Mikey. "Hinei Mah Tov (Eeoohh!)." Mikey Pauker RSS. Accessed December 29, 2016. http://mikeypauker.com/resources/hinei-mah-tov-eeoohh/.
Based on Psalm 133:1

Ee-oh (Ee-oh)

Ee-oh-oh-oh (Ee-oh-oh-oh)

Ee-oh (Ee-oh)

Oh, oh, oh

Verses 1 and 2:

Hinei ma tov uma na'im

Shevet achim gam yachad

How great it is for brothers and sisters

To hang out on this day

Verse 3:

How great it is for brothers and sisters

To hang out on this lovely day

How great it is for brothers and sisters

To hang out on this day

This song approaches the idea of community through our liturgy. It begins with a call-and-response niggun which is singable by children of all ages. The cantor or song leader calls out each line, to be repeated by the *kahal*. By beginning this way, the children are given a supportive platform to use their voices in a safe and fun way, immediately engaging them in the act of community singing. The chorus is repeated twice, followed

by two repetitions of each verse with a chorus between each. The chorus combines Hebrew with informal English vernacular. Pauker chose to use language children might use themselves, using slang ("hang out") as a loose translation of *shevet* (dwell). The goal is for the children to enjoy the accessible language, and come away with a liturgical understanding of the prayer that fits into their world view. The message of the song is one of gratitude and exuberance for the opportunity to be together. Teaching children to be grateful for their Jewish community, and for the time they spend together, is a key step in encouraging children to to be active in their Jewish communities, and songs such as this one teach the concept without preaching.

This song is presented through a pop idiom, lending a feel to the piece that is familiar to children, as this is what much of the music in their secular lives sounds like. The rhythm is steady with strong forward momentum. The melody is predictable and has limited range. Rhythmic and structural clarity are important in creating safe musical space that encourages children to sing.

When I have taught this song, children have naturally gravitated toward each other - they place their arms around each other and dance together. The chorus bookends the song and punctuates each verse, allowing even the youngest children to sing, making this ideal for a *kahal* of mixed ages as well as for the older children who connect most strongly to the language. This song meets children where they are and brings them together.

Knowledge of Hebrew

Hebrew is another component integral to Jewish identity formation. It is the language in which we pray, and the language of our sacred texts. Modern Hebrew is spoken in Israel, and is essential to understanding Israeli culture. It is one of the things that binds us to our past and can create commonality between Jews throughout the world. Rabbi Tamara Miller states, "Hebrew connects the Jewish child with a historical telescope that reaches beyond our insular present.[41]" Diaspora Jews affirm the importance of Hebrew with one of our very first acts in the life of a Jewish child in the choosing of a Hebrew name.

It is generally accepted that a second language is learned most easily during early childhood, when their first language is still developing. In a synagogue setting, fluency is not the usual goal. Rather, children are given a working vocabulary of words and concepts found in liturgy. This is supplemented with morality concepts such as *tikkun olam* (repairing the world) as well as some modern vocabulary, as needed, which ties into Israel education.

Hebrew can also be a barrier to a feeling of belonging in the Jewish community. When I first entered the synagogue as a young adult with no formal Jewish education, I was overwhelmed by what I experienced. I did not understand the language of prayer and it made me feel like I did not belong. Music was my most powerful Hebrew teacher, and it can be this for young children as well.

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[41]Miller, Tamara. "Hebrew By Design." My Jewish Learning. April 25, 2012. Accessed December 26, 2016. http://www.myjewishlearning.com/rabbis-without-borders/hebrew-by-design/2/.

Cantor Daniel Singer has written a song for preschool aged children called *Moses Went Up To The Mountain*[42] which provides an very clear example of how music can be a tool in teaching language. The song teaches the words *l'mala* and *l'mata* (up and down) in the context of Moses' ascension of the mountain to receive the Ten Commandments. The lyrics of the song are as follows.

Verse 1:

Moses went up, up, up, up, up to the mountain

To get a little closer to hear the word of God (x2)

Chorus:

L'mala means up, up, up

L'mata means down, down, down

L'mala, l'mala, l'mata, l'mata

L'mala, l'mala, l'mata, l'mata

Moses went up

Moses came down

Verse 2:

Moses went down, down, down, down, down from the mountain

To get a little closer to teach the word of God (x2)[43]

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[42] See Appendix G

[43] Singer, Daniel. "Moses Went Up To The Mountain." Unpublished sheet music, 2016.

The melody is what makes this song so effective for teaching the Hebrew vocabulary. Each time the words up and *l'mala* are used, the melody ascends. "Up, up, up" is set to an ascending triad in both the verse and the chorus. The melody descends on "down, down, down," creating a musical illustration of the meaning of the words. This is reinforced with the repetition of the Hebrew words (*l'mala* and *l'mata*) separated by an octave. By the time the Hebrew is introduced, the children already have an idea of their meaning, and so the association of *l'mala* with "up" and *l'mata* with "down" becomes instinctual. "Moses went up" then ascends, and "Moses went down" descends. Cantor Singer coined this technique "musical alliteration[44]," and it is a particularly effective technique in teaching Hebrew through music.

The song lends itself well to the use of physical motions to bolster the teaching. Children could reach for the sky on *l'mala* and to the ground for *l'mata*, further reinforcing the meaning of the Hebrew words. The Moses narrative, the illustrative and memorable melody, and the addition of physicality make this an effective tool in teaching this Hebrew vocabulary. The music adds many layers to the children's understanding.

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[44] "Interview with Cantor Daniel Singer." Telephone interview by author. December 21, 2016.

Chapter 4 - Writing Effective Music for Children

Writing Effective Music for Children

In this chapter, I will explore some of the technical and creative elements that go into writing effective Jewish music for children. I will outline the findings of my research of the musical qualities of effective children's songs and identify ways to use melody, rhythm, and words to write music that children are able and enthusiastic to sing. I will also provide examples of music that successfully employs these elements.

Vocal Range and Melody

When writing music for children, the vocal range must be considered so that children are able to comfortably perform it. Most young children have a relatively small vocal range. In *Music in Childhood: From Preschool through the Elementary Grades*, Patricia Shehan Campbell and Carol Scott-Kassner assert that the vocal range for a child at age 5 is from D4 to A4 (Campbell and Scott-Kassner 2005, 73). This figure holds true for both boys and girls. Children possess the ability to vocalize well beyond this range, but their ability to accurately match pitch beyond that may be limited. They are just acquiring the physical ability to control pitch and although they may be able to vocalize over two octaves, their ability to control their singing is limited to this small range. As children grow, their vocal abilities expand. Campbell and Scott-Kassner have determined that children from 6-7 years old can successfully sing in the range of C4 to Bb4. From

age 7-8, the range is C4 to C5, and from 8-9, their range is from B3 to Eb5. These ranges hold true for both boys and girls and are averages and approximate and not steadfast rules (Campbell and Scott-Kasner 2005, 73).

In a study published in *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, Jinyoung Kim suggested that children were able to demonstrate larger vocal ranges when asked to match pitch in the context of vocal exercises that did not include words[45]. This may be taken into account in the composition of niggunim.

Tessitura, or the pitches within the range that the majority of the pitches are placed, should also be taken into account when writing music for young children. The majority of notes, in most cases, should sit in the lower middle segment of the stated ranges. While children are able to stretch their voices to the extremes, it is not ideal for a song to ask them to spend ample time there. It can lead to vocal strain and exhaustion.

While research has shown these ranges to be generally accurate, ability varies from child to child. There is no better way to know the ability of the children you work with than to sing with them. While singing with my small children's choir in my synagogue, I have found that they are able to easily exceed the ranges that are recommended for children of their age and they enjoy the challenge of music that asks them to go beyond it. This does not, however, hold true for my religious school. When writing for a specific group of children, it is imperative to take the time to know the singers so that you can make musical decisions that are tailored to the ability of the

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[45]Kim, Jinyoung. "Children's Pitch Matching, Vocal Range, and Developmentally Appropriate Practice." Children's Pitch Matching, Vocal Range, and Developmentally Appropriate Practice. March 22, 2000. Accessed December 23, 2016. https://www.thefreelibrary.com/_/print/PrintArticle.aspx?id=63567045.

children for whom the song is intended. The ranges presented in this thesis are merely a guideline.

Effective melodies for children are based on patterns and repetition that work within a singable vocal range for the targeted children. Patterns create predictability. When a melody is predictable, it creates a safe space in which the child can join in and sing without fear of getting it wrong. When a pattern is strong and obvious enough, a person does not need to have strong musical intelligence in order to succeed in singing it. Patterns appeal to an array of Gardner's multiple intelligences (musical, harmonic, visual-spatial, and logical-mathematical). Research has shown that the use of patterns in music has a strong correlation with mathematical skills, further increasing their value for young children[46]. In a synagogue setting, we are rarely dealing with only a selective group of musically inclined young children, and so it is especially important that the children are helped to succeed. Melodies containing well-defined patterns, both in pitch and rhythm, help to achieve this.

Intervals are another important element to pay attention to in the composition of music for children. Stepwise motion is easiest for children to sing. Triadic motion is also intuitive for children. Dissonant intervals such as the tritone are much more difficult to

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[46]Geist, Kamile, Eugene A. Geist, and Kathleen Kuznik. "The Patterns of Music: Young Children Learning Mathematics through Beat, Rhythm, and Melody." National Association for the Education of Young Children. January 2012. Accessed December 24, 2016. https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=0ahUKEwjy_7OlhdrRAhUF0iYKHYhHA4wQFggiMAE&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.naeyc.org%2Ffiles%2Fyc%2Ffile%2F201201%2FGeist_Patterns_of_Music_Jan012.pdf&usg=AFQjCNFbZJXmC9SwyDy1dFHpUNLc2Oaf_Q&sig2=mGxNBf3t64nP-WJR0PgQdg&bvm=bv.144686652,d.eWE.

sing. When teaching Jeff Klepper's *Shalom Rav*[47] to my religious school students, I have always been frustrated when we get to "*b'chol eit uv'chol sha'ah*." The interval between "*b'chol*" and "*eit*" is a tritone, and it is the only place in the piece that the children do not sing out with confidence. There is a place for dissonant intervals, but they should be used sparingly, as singing them requires a higher level of skill than consonant intervals.

Ellen Allard did urge the use of caution in using leaps of large intervals in music for children. In her experience, these are very difficult for children to sing. This does not preclude their use completely in her music. Rather, she chooses moments carefully, usually for the emphasis of a word or concept, and she avoids them within melodies that are designed for children to sing in order that the melodic line not get in the way of a child's ability to successfully sing the song[48].

Let us examine a classic melody that I have found to be especially effective for young children. Debbie Friedman's *The Alef Bet Song*[49][50] has several parts. I will focus on the chorus, as it is the part of the song that children sing. The verses do align with these guidelines successful melodies but are intended for the leader to sing.

The melody of the chorus contains intervals and sequences that enhance its singability and make it predictable while still being interesting and fun. The melody opens with a mostly stepwise ascending line with simple rhythm (א–ב–ב) , and is

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[47] Klepper, Jeff and Dan Freelander. *The Complete Jewish Songbook: Shireinu*. Edited by Joel N. Eglash. Compiled by Erik S. Komar. New York, NY: Transcontinental Music Publications: 302.
[48] "Interview with Ellen Allard." Telephone interview by author. January 12, 2017.
[49] Friedman, Deborah Lynn. *Sing Unto God: The Debbie Friedman Anthology*. Edited by Joel N. Eglash. New York, NY: Freda and Cheryl Friedman and Transcontinental Music Publications, 2013: 18-20
[50] See Appendix B

answered with a descending line (ג–ד–ה). This same sequence is then transposed to a higher point in the scale, moving in a motion that mirrors the first (ו–ז–ח–ט, י–כ–פ). The next two lines move in similar contour to the second half of the opening sequence, lending a cohesiveness to the melody that helps it to feel intuitive (ל–מ–נ, ס–ע–פ–פ). It closes with a repeat of the very first line, followed by a descending cadence (צ–ק–ר, שׁ–ש–ת). As is indicated in the lyrics of the first verse, this is an echo song. The melody is sung first by the leader, and then repeated by the children. It then is sung in reverse echo, with the children calling and the leader responding. Because the intention is that the children be able to independently recall the melody in order that they lead it, the sequential nature is especially important, as is the simplicity of the intervals. These sequences aid in memory and, along with the repetitive rhythms, they are what create the catchy nature of this tune. I find that when I teach this song, even very young children are able to lead the melody after hearing it only twice. They can't always remember the letters, but they can successfully sing back the melody, allowing them to concentrate on learning the letters rather than recalling the melodic line.

In writing her melodies, Ellen Allard relies more on intuition than on rules of effective writing, but her intuition leads her toward melodies that tend to comply with conventional wisdom on the subject. As a classically trained pianist, she has studied and performed the melodies of composers such Bach, Beethoven, Brahms, Schubert, and Chopin. This training has informed her understanding of melody, and she sees their

influence in all of her writing. She stressed the value of studying composers of great melodies in order to inform one's own writing[51].

Rhythm

When writing music for children, the writer must be conscious of the development of children's rhythmic abilities in order to write music that invites participation. Rhythm is inherent to the life of a child. From the sound of their heartbeat to the pace at which they walk to the sounds of music on television and sung by their parents, children begin absorbing information about rhythm from the time they are born. Their ability to imitate rhythm begins early. By the age of 4-5, most children have developed the ability to tap a simple beat. Children at this age are able to mimic simple sung rhythmic patterns at a slow to medium tempo. By 6-7, children have developed the ability to distinguish between slow and fast as well as long and short. They are able to speed up and slow down when prompted. They are able to imitate and perform simple rhythmic patterns. At age 8-9, children are able to perform simple syncopation at varied tempi. When children are exposed early and often to music, these skills can develop earlier than stated (Campbell and Scott-Kassner 2005, 166).

Rhythm and tempo are an important considerations when writing music for preschool children to sing. Songs with extremely simple rhythms are developmentally appropriate. *Row Your Boat*, *Mary Had A Little Lamb*, and *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*

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[51] "Interview with Ellen Allard." Telephone interview by author. January 12, 2017.

are examples from the secular repertoire that demonstrate simple rhythm appropriate for very young children. Jewish favorites *David Melech Yisrael* and the traditional triple-meter *Hinei Ma Tov* setting also embody this concept (although the latter spans an octave, making the melody difficult for preschool children to sing). All of these examples are comprised of extremely simple rhythms and are free of syncopation. Very simple syncopation can be used, such as in *Shabbat Shalom (Hey)*, but may take time to teach accurately.

Another feature of each of these songs is that they contain simple repeating rhythmic patterns. Patterns in rhythm, much like patterns in melody, make a song predictable. Children are much more likely to sing when they are able to predict what is coming next, as it builds their confidence that they will be able to get it right.

Music written for preschool children can be much more rhythmically varied when they are not expected to sing it themselves. A favorite song of many preschool aged children that I have taught is Peter and Ellen Allard's *God Is Everywhere*[52]. It is full of syncopated rhythms. It was written with the goal of participation, but not necessarily for the child to sing themselves. It is an example of a rhythmically complex song that is effective for preschool aged children.

Children in first and second grade have progressed well beyond their preschool capabilities and the rhythm in the music written for them can reflect that. In Peter and

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[52] Allard, Peter and Ellen. *Manginot: The Complete Jewish Songbook for Children, Volume II*. Edited by J. Mark Dunn, Joel N. Eglash, and Cantor Alane S. Katzew. New York, NY: Transcontinental Music Publications, 2004: 60-1.

Ellen Allard's *Lotsa Lotsa Matza*[53], a faster tempo is paired with more complex rhythms, including dotted motifs and sixteenth notes. I have found this to be easily singable by children starting around first grade, but it is beyond the abilities of the average preschooler. Early primary school children can successfully imitate my demonstration of the rhythm and because the text is set in a way that echoes natural speech patterns, they are able to intuitively adjust the rhythm as the words change.

As with melody, Allard relies on intuition as much as on conventional research on the subject in order to use rhythm effectively in her music. She is skeptical, especially, that syncopation can't be used even with very young children. This is evident in examining her body of work. Many of her rhythms are highly syncopated. Cantor Yakov Hadash also adamantly disputes this point. In his experience, even kindergarteners are not only capable of singing syncopated rhythms but are excited by their use[54]. Both Cantor Hadash and Ms. Allard expressed that, because children are exposed to syncopated rhythms in the music that surrounds them outside of their synagogue life, they are intuitively able to understand and sing them, and that their familiarity with this device makes the inclusion of syncopation not only permissible but valuable in the composition of music for children. Allard referred to her song *God God God*. The chorus ends with a syncopated sequence that includes clapping. She stated that every group of children she has ever taught it to, no matter their age, was able to sing and clap the chorus with ease[55].

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[53] Allard, Peter and Ellen. *Manginot: The Complete Jewish Songbook for Children, Volume II*. Edited by J. Mark Dunn, Joel N. Eglash, and Cantor Alane S. Katzew. New York, NY: Transcontinental Music Publications, 2004: 133-5.

[54] "Interview with Cantor Yakov Hadash." Telephone interview by author. December 22, 2016.

[55] "Interview with Ellen Allard." Telephone interview by author. January 12, 2017.

In reflecting on her writing technique, Ms. Allard described a practice in which she will return to a melody she has written and specifically review the rhythm that came naturally to her, looking for ways to "spice it up." She explained, "I might want to massage the song and add some more interesting rhythms to it. I think children are capable of singing more complicated rhythms in songs." She described a technique of looking at the song as a whole and adding syncopation or other rhythmic variation to the verses if the chorus has straight rhythm, making her songs more interesting. She believes this practice of reviewing a song specifically for the purpose of determining its rhythmic interest is a part of what makes her music successful[56].

Words

The ability of a song to make an impact on a child is often dependent upon thoughtfully crafted lyrics. Songs are extremely effective vehicles for presenting a message or teaching to children. The possibilities for what a song can convey through its lyrics are limited only by the imagination of the songwriter.

Research about what makes for effective song lyrics for children is scarce, perhaps due to the deeply personal nature of the endeavor of writing them. In studying various songs that have been successfully used with children in Jewish settings, I have identified several elements that are common to many of them.

Literary devices commonly found in poetry are often used in lyrics to children's music. Rhyme is present in nearly all of the children's music that I have studied. Rhyme

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[56] "Interview with Ellen Allard." Telephone interview by author. January 12, 2017.

has many purposes within a song. A song's impact is greatest when it is easy to remember, and the use of rhyme reinforces a child's ability to remember the words, and therefore, the message. Rhyme involves both sound and structure (a rhyme scheme). The use of rhyme within a song helps create entry points that tap into several of Gardner's multiple intelligences. A song with an ABAB rhyme scheme, for instance, requires elements of verbal-linguistic intelligence in its use of words, logical-mathematical intelligence in its use of meter, and musical intelligence in its use of both rhythm and melody. Alliteration is another device that is commonly used in children's music that serves to aid memory. Both rhyme and alliteration also add an element of fun to a song, which is imperative to keeping a child's interest and capturing their heart.

Children and humor go hand in hand. Children laugh before they can talk, and the use of humor brings joy into the musical experience. Many of the favorite songs of children in my religious school involve humor, and they request these songs with frequency and enthusiasm. Ellen Allard uses humor in much of her music. She expressed that the topic does not have to be light in order for humor to be an effective tool to use within a song. Allard's "*Lashon Hara*[57]*"* uses both rhyme and humor in a clever way that is memorable, joyful, and also imparts a very serious teaching. The lyrics to the first verse and chorus are as follows:

Did you ever have occasion

To assign an accusation

[57] Peter & Ellen Allard. *Little Taste of Torah*. Transcontinental Music, 2009, CD.

To a person who is nowhere to be seen

Or perhaps you're in bad humor

So you spread a nasty rumor

Saying words that are deliberately mean

When you give someone a roastin'

And you're braggin' and you're boastin'

But you know somehow that deep inside it's wrong

You can make a course correction

By reversing your direction

And remembering this simple little song

Lashon hara *Sh! Sh! Sh! Sh!*

Lashon hara *Sh! Sh! Sh! Sh!*

It's the words we speak that say just who we are

So don't repeat it, just delete it

Our advice if you should need it

Lashon hara *Sh! Sh! Sh! Sh!*

Lashon hara *Sh! Sh! Sh! Sh!*

In reflecting on her use of humor in this song, Allard said, "Sometimes, the humor in children's music can be very sophisticated. In *Lashon Hara*, the words are fun and

silly, but there's also a really important deep-in-your-kishkes message there about not gossiping, and that's such an important part of who we are as Jews[58]."

This song is also a strong example of how rhyme can be used to create structure, aiding in memory. The rhyme scheme is AABAAB and is strictly adhered to. The strict structure along with the carefully rhymed words at the end lend a predictable nature to the song, which helps a child feel comfortable trying to participate.

Karina Zilberman of 92Y's Shababa Network commissioned a beautiful song called *Bye Bye Yuckies*[59], written by Dave Matkowsky. This song is a healing prayer for young children. The word 'yuckies' denotes any negative thing which would cause a person to need healing. This was borrowed from a young child Zilberman knew who was undergoing treatment for cancer. This was the word the child used to refer to her illness. Zilberman found that this word spoke of illness in a way that children connected deeply to, and she commissioned this song around that theme. It has become a favorite of the Shababa Network[60]. The lyrics are as follows.

Eil na r'fa na la

Na na na, r'fa na la

Eil na r'fa na la

Na na, na na, na na

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[58] "Interview with Ellen Allard." Telephone interview by author. January 12, 2017.
[59] Zilberman, Karina, and Rebecca Schoffer. *92Y Presents: Shababa Of The Heart*. 2016, CD.
[60] "Interview with Karina Zilberman." Interview by author. December 23, 2016.

Let's put the yuckies in a blanket

And roll them up tight

Put the blanket in a rocket

And send it out of sight

Bye bye yuckies, go away

Don't come back any other day

Bye bye yuckies, go away

Don't come back any other day

And if you come back

I'll send you away again

Zilberman stressed the importance of speaking to children in the language in which they play. This is demonstrated not only in the use of 'yuckies,' but in the concept of putting them in a rocket to send them away. She uses the words to tap into the child's imagination.

When writing this song, Matkowsky and Zilberman asked the question, "How can kids help grown ups connect with a moment that embraces everyone?" Zilberman sees all children's music as family music - the goal is not only to entertain children, but to create music that is enjoyable and valuable for everyone in a family. She was inspired by the capacity of the child with cancer to cope with her illness and she saw in it the opportunity to create a teaching for all from the wisdom of that child.

Zilberman was insistent that one should "write a song with a dream, not an agenda." She believes songs should be organic, and that the ultimate goal of every song should be to create connection between people. Any further agenda gets in the way of that. As such, her songs often have one simple but deep, spiritual message. *Bye Bye, Yuckies* is a song about being empowered to create your own healing[61].

Movement

For children, movement and music go hand in hand. Campbell and Scott-Kassner write:

> 'The foundation of music for children is ultimately and intimately entwined with their physical selves. Music, the aural art, is also music, the kinesthetic art. Children develop their musical abilities through a combination of what they experience through their ears, eyes, and bodies. As children listen, sing, or play instruments—even as they read music—their aural, visual, and kinesthetic senses are activated. Movement is thus vital to their musical development and basic to all that they do (Campbell and Scott-Kassner 2005, 128)."

Adding an element of movement to a song is one of the most effective ways of helping children to connect to it. It creates an outlet for their boundless energy. It encourages creativity. It aids memory. As Cantor Daniel Singer noted, children are

[61] "Interview with Karina Zilberman." Interview by author. December 23, 2016.

constantly in motion. In my own experience, it is clear that music awakens a child's connection with their physicality. Without any instruction or encouragement, the children I teach bounce and sway the minute I begin to play a song. When I begin to play Craig Taubman's *Adonai S'fatai* on the guitar during our religious school *tefilah* service, the children bend their knees, bounce, and clap their hands - it brings out their natural exuberance.

Much of Ellen Allard's music lends itself to the use of movement. In her composition, she does not begin with movement. Rather, she lets it grow naturally out of the song.. Her compositions do not often include instruction for movement[62]. Karina Zilberman agrees. She, too, is a proponent of allowing movement to be a natural part of the music she writes and performs without being overtly instructional. Both agree that children will move in a way that is natural and meaningful to them. It is Zilberman's experience that children will observe each other, and uniform movement often grows out of this practice. During a *Sh'ma* moment in her Shababa experience, during which she was using the musical moment to foster a feeling of oneness, a small child left her place on the floor and came forward, extending his finger out to reach Zilberman's. Observing this action, other children lifted one finger and touched the fingers of the children and grown-ups in their midst and out of that, a practice of movement was born which became a central tradition in their services. Zilberman believes that, had she instructed the children how to move in this moment, they would not have found the practice that cut to the heart of the playfulness and understanding of these children[63].

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[62] "Interview with Ellen Allard." Telephone interview by author. January 12, 2017.
[63] "Interview with Karina Zilberman." Interview by author. December 23, 2016.

Chapter 5 - Application of Techniques

Original Music

As a culmination of this thesis, I have written three songs for children using what I have learned through research, musical analysis, and interviews.

Hal'luYAH[64]

Hal'luYAH is a creative setting of Psalm 150 for young children (ages 5-7). While based on a translation of the psalm, the words are simplified to language more in line with what a child might use in play in order that they may connect to the playful nature of this musical psalm. It is based around a hook in which the name of God is emphasized as a midrash on the word "*Halleluyah."* A mapich (mark of vocalization) is found in the ה of the word in Hebrew, and this setting is written to emphasize and give voice to that. When teaching this song, I use this as an opportunity to spark conversation about *Yah* being a name for God. I ask children why we might want to emphasize God's name when we offer praise.

I wrote the melody and rhythm of this song with many of the conventions for good children's writing laid out by Campbell and Scott-Kassner in *Music in Childhood* in mind. It has a limited vocal range, mostly stepwise motion, simple rhythm, and ample repetition. My goal was to create a song that young children could immediately jump into and participate. As such, this song is written in a call and response style within the verses.

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[64] See Appendix D

The song leader sings the first line, and then the children respond, either by vocalizing or with movement as directed by the lyric of the song. Within the verses, the children, with coaxing from the leader, imitate the sounds of the instruments that praise God. When I have taught this song, this has needed little explanation, and has benefitted from a lack of explicit instruction. It worked best when I allowed the children to use their creativity. Most of the imitation of the instruments happens in the context of the same rhythm and melody that the children sing together with the leader during the chorus in order that the child may focus on the sound or movement rather than on the melody. The notated melody for the responses is merely a suggestion. They are meant to be two measures of children's improvisational mimicking of the instrument. Above all, the song is meant to be fun, with a melody and rhythmic structure that evoke celebration.

The hook of the chorus was written to be immediately singable and memorable. I borrowed from Ellen Allard's method of writing and teaching a hook, which she laid our interview. I have written an intentional earworm, as children will be asked within the verse to repeat the melody from the chorus in different forms. I felt it was important that they be able to immediately internalize the melody and so I used repetition of this simple line in both the chorus and the verses.

There is a large bodily-kinesthetic intelligence element to this song. I wrote the song with the idea that children will not only imitate the instruments with their voices, but will use movement to illustrate the playing of the instrument that the leader calls out. When I taught this, I did not need to instruct children to do this - they did it

automatically. The movement offers an alternative entry point to participation in the song.

This song can also become a zipper song in the spirit of Mimi Brodsky Chenfield's question, "What more can I do[65]?" I have, with much success, asked my students what instruments they would use to praise God, and zipped them into the verse of the song in place of the instruments of praise in Psalm 150. This opens up the song to their creativity and ownership and prompts them to think about the sounds that spark celebration and joy for them.

This song was written for children in Piaget's Preoperational stage, during which children rely on the physical in order to form their knowledge. They are late in this stage, and this song relies on the ability of deferred imitation for the imitation of the instruments. The imagery is simple and concrete and meant to spark their imagination.

Fowler stressed that this is a critical time for children in the development of their faith, and that lessons taught during this early (Intuitive Projective) stage often have long-reaching implications for a child's faith development. As such, the point of this song is to evoke pure joy, play, and fun. It is my hope that this song and songs like it can be a tool in creating positive associations with prayer, the synagogue, God, and Judaism.

Like You[66]

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[65] Chenfeld, Mimi Brodsky. *Teaching in the Key of Life*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1993.

[66] See Appendix F

Like You is a song that uses *Mi Chamocha* liturgy in order to teach the concept of *b'tzelem elohim*. This song was written for ages 7 and up. It has a slightly expanded vocal range from that of *Hal'luYAH*, as well as a more complicated and syncopated rhythm. It also has a more sophisticated teaching within it than *Hal'luYAH*.

The structure of this song comes from rhythmic repetition, a repetitive melodic contour, and the repetition of the word *you*, which acts as a rhyme element. The verses and the chorus have nearly exactly the same rhythm. Melodically, the chorus follows the same contour as the verses, but is transposed up a sixth. I tried to write a song that felt a little more "grown up" than *Hal'luYAH*, but remained vocally and rhythmically accessible. I also wrote a melody that felt, to me, like prayer, so that I could model spiritual connection to prayer for them in the course of teaching and singing it.

I wrote this song to reinforce an ongoing teaching in my religious school about being made in God's image. I ask a series of questions to my religious school students, to which they always have the same answers. The questions and answers are as follows:

Mi Chamocha is a question. What is the question?

-Who is like You, God?

What is the answer?

-Nobody.

But who is kind of like God?

-Everybody.

Why?

-We are made in the image of God.

Since my students are already familiar with the concept of *b'tzelem Elohim* in conjunction with *Mi Chamocha*, I decided to write this song in order to reinforce this notion and to move the conversation beyond the questions I outlined. I based the lyrics on both the translation of the liturgy and the idea that being made in God's image means we have a responsibility to act in a way that is holy. When I have taught this song, I have used it to begin a conversation about what it means to be made in God's image, and how one might act in ways that are reflective of this. It would be possible to replace the words "holy" and "awesome," used to describe God, with the children's own words as determined in this conversation to add an element of their creativity.

According to Kohlberg, children around this age are likely in the Good Boy/Nice Girl stage, and are receptive to teaching that asks them to consider what it means to act in ways that are in line with what is expected of them, in this case, by God[67]. It is also rooted in Fowler's theory, in which children in the Mythical-Literal stage easily connect to story and narrative in order to create meaning. The song asks a question (Who is like God?), and then answers it, suggesting that they can, through their choices and actions, be like God.

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[67]"Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development - Boundless Open Textbook." Boundless. Accessed January 20, 2017. https://www.boundless.com/psychology/textbooks/boundless-psychology-textbook/human-development-14/theories-of-human-development-70/kohlberg-s-stages-of-moral-development-268-12803/.

Esa Einai[68]

I wrote this song with Shira Kline's imagery the mountain in mind. It combines the Hebrew text and an English translation of Psalm 121:1-2. I wanted the melody follow the contour of the words, and so it ascends, reaching its climax on the word *heharim* (the mountains). I wanted the melody to illustrate the mountain.

This song is meant for children ages 9 and up. The melody and the Hebrew would be too difficult for younger children. It employs many of the 8 principles derived from my interviews which I outlined in Chapter 2. It opens with a simple, stepwise niggun and then moves into the first line of the psalm, which acts as a hook. I used rhythmic repetition throughout the song, which is shared between the melodies of the niggun, the first verse, and the second verse. The whole song repeats in English, and then returns to the niggun. I tried to write a song that could be used with children or adults. Since this is meant to be used with the older children, I wanted to provide a more "grown-up" melody for them. I imagine this being used in family services and I wanted the melody to be relatable and enjoyable to both children and their parents. Although I did not include an element of movement in this song, in my teaching, I point out the way that the melody climbs, and have the children connect the ascension of the melody with ascending a mountain. I use the text of this song as the basis for a conversation with my students about the ways God can help them when they are troubled, and ask them to think about those things as we sing.

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[68] See Appendix C

The children at this song's target age are in Piaget's Concrete Operations stage, and are beginning to develop their abstract problem solving abilities. This song offers the opportunity for children to exercise this ability by imagining ways in which God can be their help. According to Kohlberg, children at this age are often motivated by a fear of disapproval. This song affirms for them the forgiving nature of God, teaching that God is a source of help and comfort no matter what the situation.

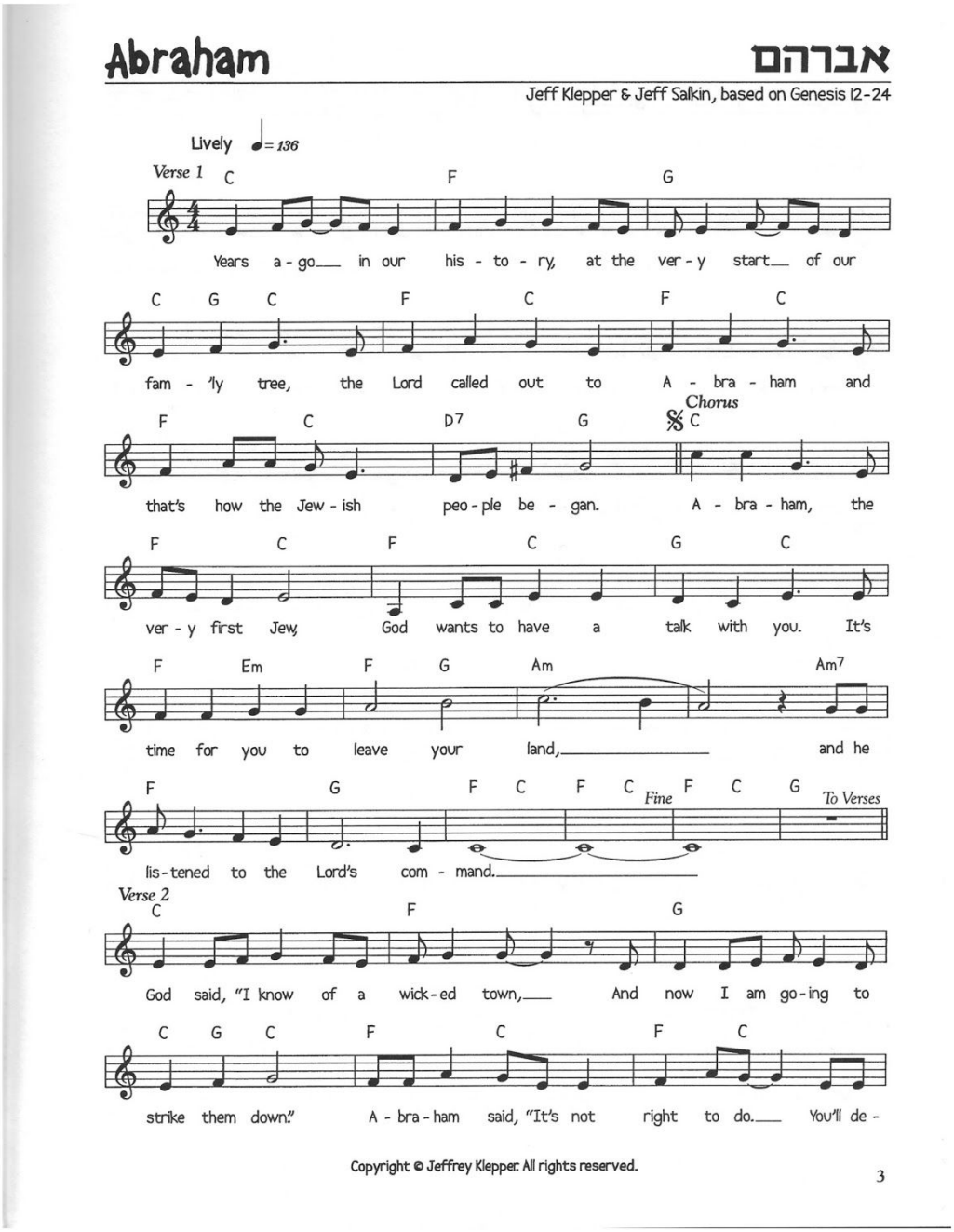
Conclusion

When a song is thoughtfully crafted and taught to children, it can be a powerful tool in helping them to know who they are as Jews. History, language, values, custom, and culture can all be conveyed through song. A song offers a compact, memorable way to impart a lesson in a way that taps into children's creativity and promotes ownership.

As composers and music educators, we owe it to the children we teach to approach the task of creating new Jewish children's music with care, crafting our songs in ways that bring joy, spirituality, and knowledge. Our songs must encourage children to use their voices, to be creative, to connect with each other, and to take ownership of their experience. I look forward to the opportunity to continue to apply the wisdom and techniques I have gained through this project to the creation of new and dynamic Jewish children's music that may play a small part in passing on our rich tradition to the next generation.

Appendices

APPENDIX A



Abraham

אברהם

Jeff Klepper & Jeff Salkin, based on Genesis 12-24

Lively ♩= 136

Verse 1

C F G

Years a - go in our his - to - ry, at the ver - y start of our

C G C F C F C

fam - 'ly tree, the Lord called out to A - bra - ham and

F C D7 G 𝄋 C *Chorus*

that's how the Jew - ish peo - ple be - gan. A - bra - ham, the

F C F C G C

ver - y first Jew, God wants to have a talk with you. It's

F Em F G Am Am7

time for you to leave your land, and he

F G F C F C *Fine* F C G *To Verses*

lis - tened to the Lord's com - mand.

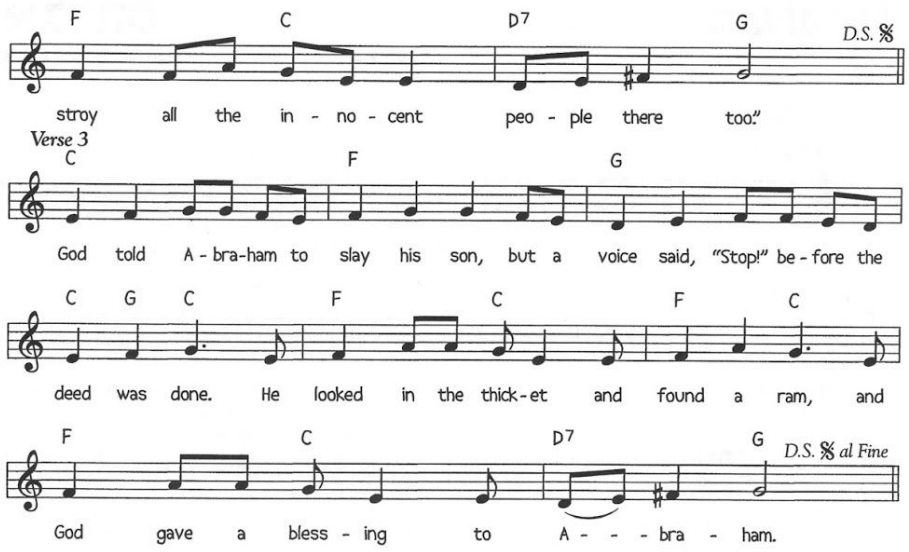
Verse 2

C F G

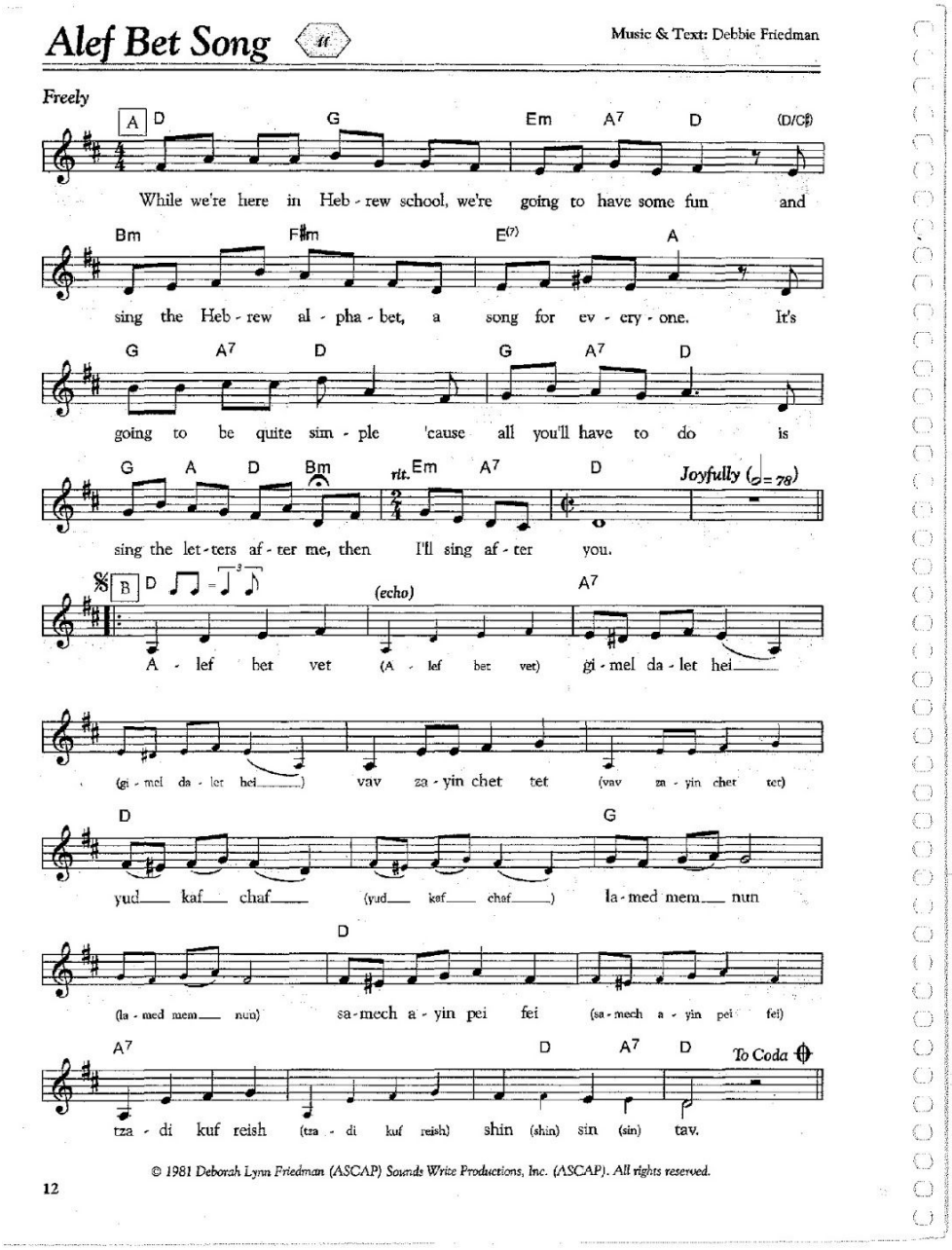
God said, "I know of a wick - ed town, And now I am go - ing to

C G C F C F C

strike them down." A - bra - ham said, "It's not right to do. You'll de -


F C D7 G D.S. 𝄋
stroy all the in - no - cent peo - ple there too."
Verse 3
C F G
God told A - bra-ham to slay his son, but a voice said, "Stop!" be - fore the
C G C F C F C
deed was done. He looked in the thick-et and found a ram, and
F C D7 G D.S. 𝄋 al Fine
God gave a bless - ing to A - - - bra - ham.

APPENDIX B



Alef Bet Song

Music & Text: Debbie Friedman

Freely

A D G Em A7 D (D/C♯)

While we're here in Heb - rew school, we're going to have some fun and

Bm F♯m E(7) A

sing the Heb - rew al - pha - bet, a song for ev - ery - one. It's

G A7 D G A7 D

going to be quite sim - ple 'cause all you'll have to do is

G A D Bm *rit.* Em A7 D *Joyfully* (♩= 78)

sing the let - ters af - ter me, then I'll sing af - ter you.

B D *(echo)* A7

A - lef bet vet (A - lef bet vet) gi - mel da - let hei

(gi - mel da - let hei) vav za - yin chet tet (vav za - yin chet tet)

D G

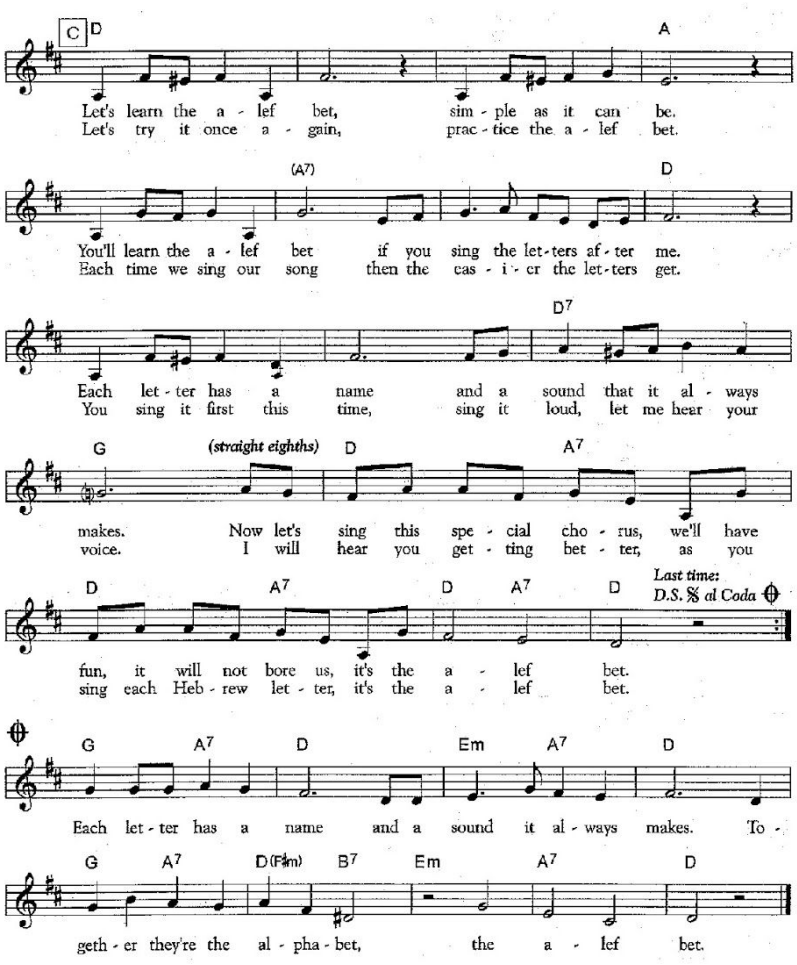
yud kaf chaf (yud kaf chaf) la - med mem nun

D

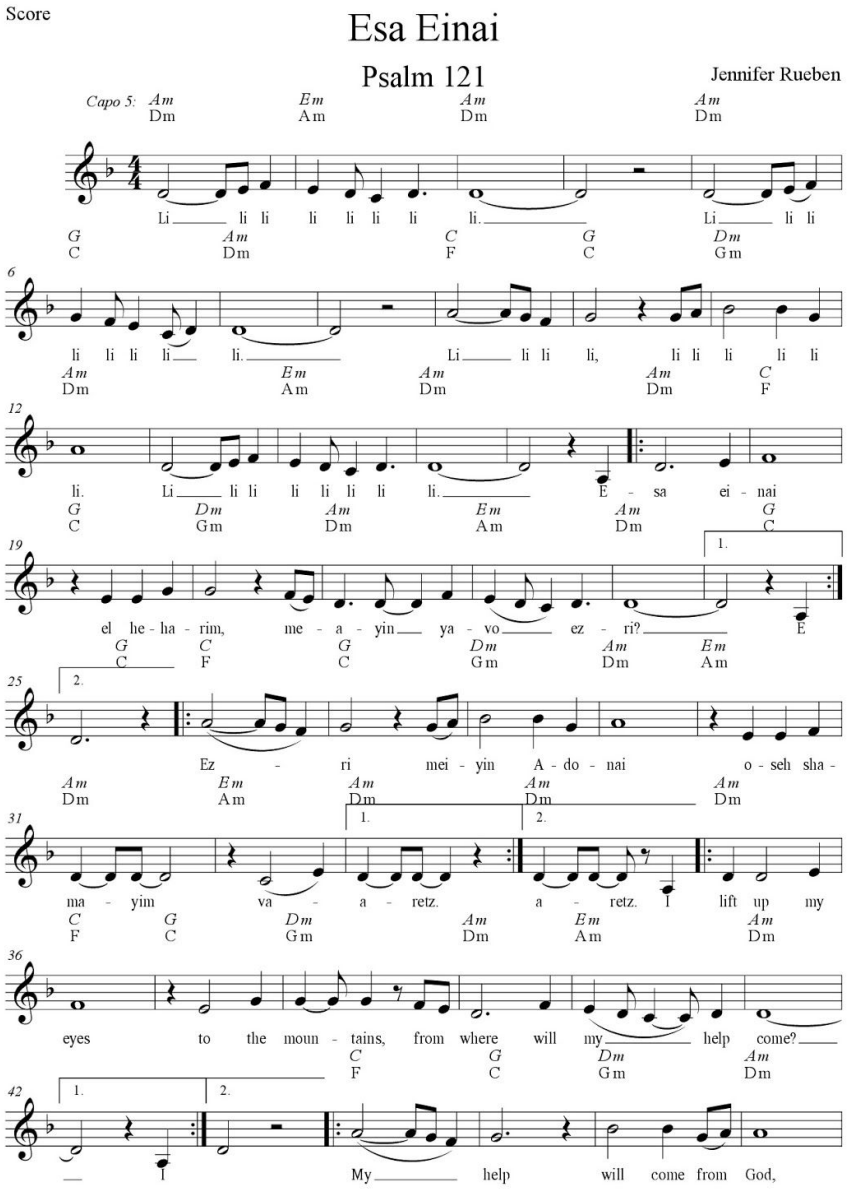
(la - med mem nun) sa - mech a - yin pei fei (sa - mech a - yin pei fei)

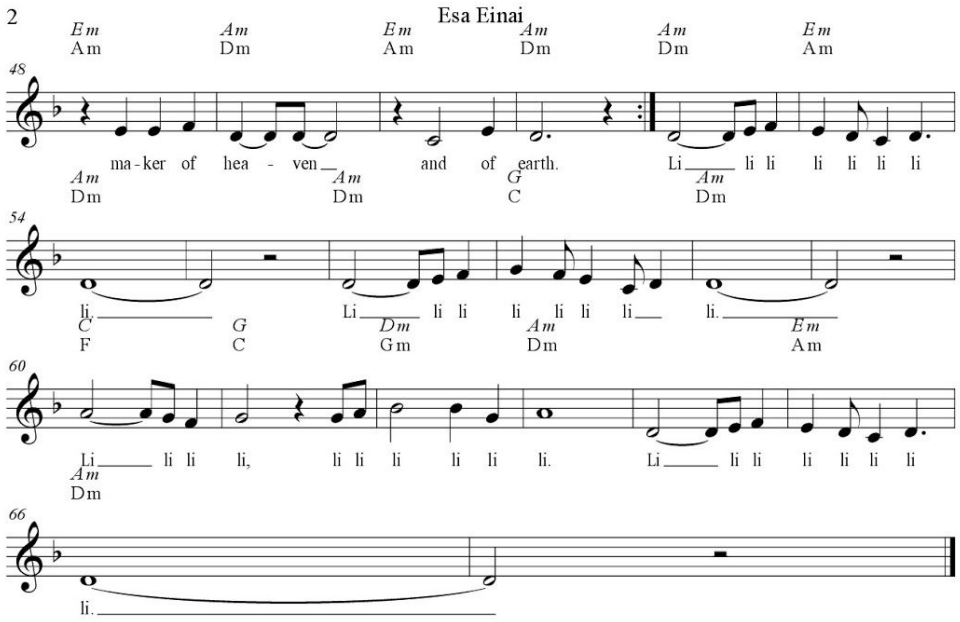
A7 D A7 D *To Coda*

tza - di kuf reish (tza - di kuf reish) shin (shin) sin (sin) tav.


C D
A
Let's learn the a - lef bet, sim - ple as it can be.
Let's try it once a - gain, prac - tice the a - lef bet.
(A7)
D
You'll learn the a - lef bet if you sing the let - ters af - ter me.
Each time we sing our song then the eas - i - er the let - ters ger.
D7
Each let - ter has a name and a sound that it al - ways
You sing it first this time, sing it loud, let me hear your
G
(straight eighths)
D
A7
makes. Now let's sing this spe - cial cho - rus, we'll have
voice. I will hear you get - ting bet - ter, as you
D
A7
D
A7
D
Last time:
D.S. 𝄋 al Coda
fun, it will not bore us, it's the a - lef bet.
sing each Heb - rew let - ter, it's the a - lef bet.
G
A7
D
Em
A7
D
Each let - ter has a name and a sound it al - ways makes. To -
G
A7
D(F♯m)
B7
Em
A7
D
geth - er they're the al - pha - bet, the a - lef bet.
אבב ... גדה ... וזחט ... יכב ... למנ ... סעפפ ... צקר ... ששת
(Hebrew alphabet)
13

APPENDIX C


Score
Esa Einai
Psalm 121
Jennifer Rueben
Capo 5:
Li li li li li li li li. Li li li
li li li li li. Li li li, li li li li li
li. Li li li li li li li. E - sa ei - nai
el he - ha - rim, me - a - yin ya - vo ez - ri? E
Ez - ri mei - yin A - do - nai o - seh sha -
ma - yim va - a - retz. a - retz. I lift up my
eyes to the moun - tains, from where will my help come?
I My help will come from God,


2
Esa Einai
Em Am Em Am Am Em
Am Dm Am Dm Dm Am
48
ma-ker of hea - ven and of earth. Li li li li li li
Am Am G Am
Dm Dm C Dm
54
li. Li li li li li li li.
C G Dm Am Em
F C Gm Dm Am
60
Li li li, li li li li li li. Li li li li li li
Am
Dm
66
li.

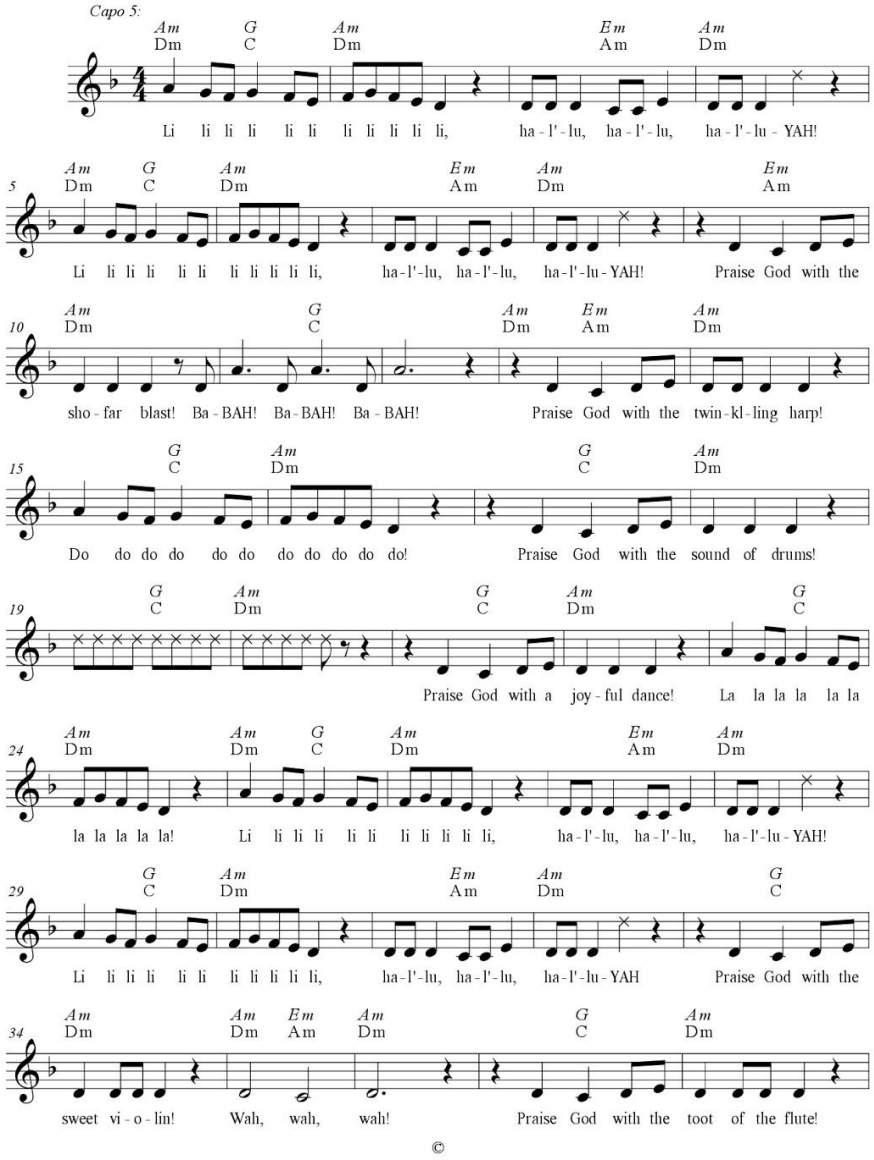
APPENDIX D

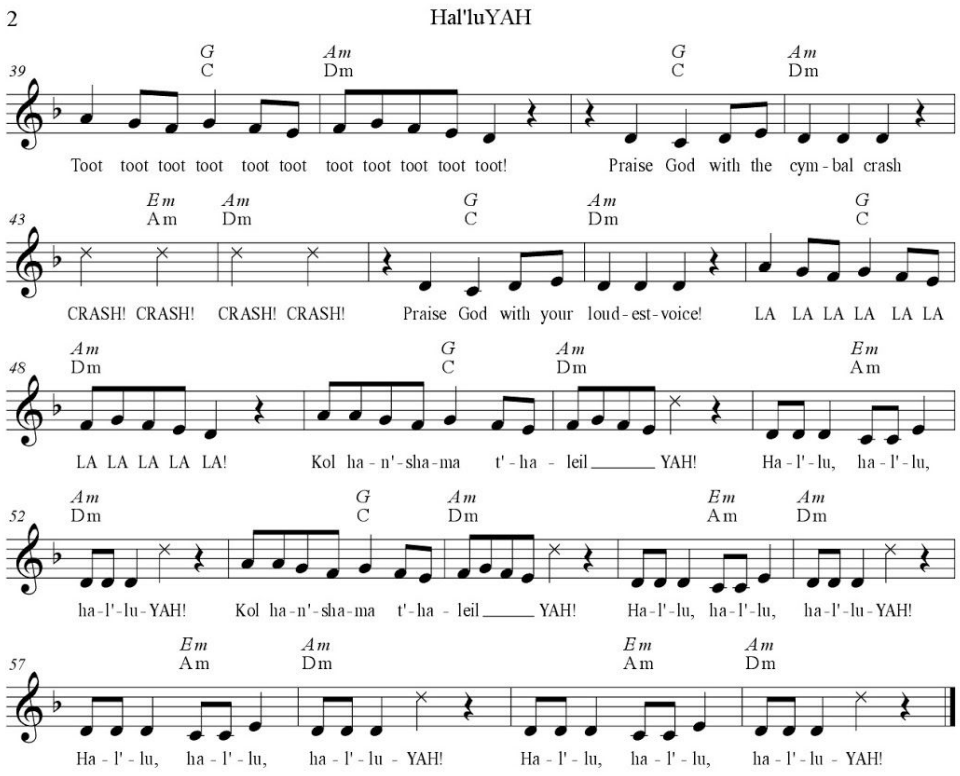
Children should mime and mimic each instrument. This song can also be a zipper song, with the children inserting their own instruments.

Hal'luYAH

Based on Psalm 150

Jennifer Rueben

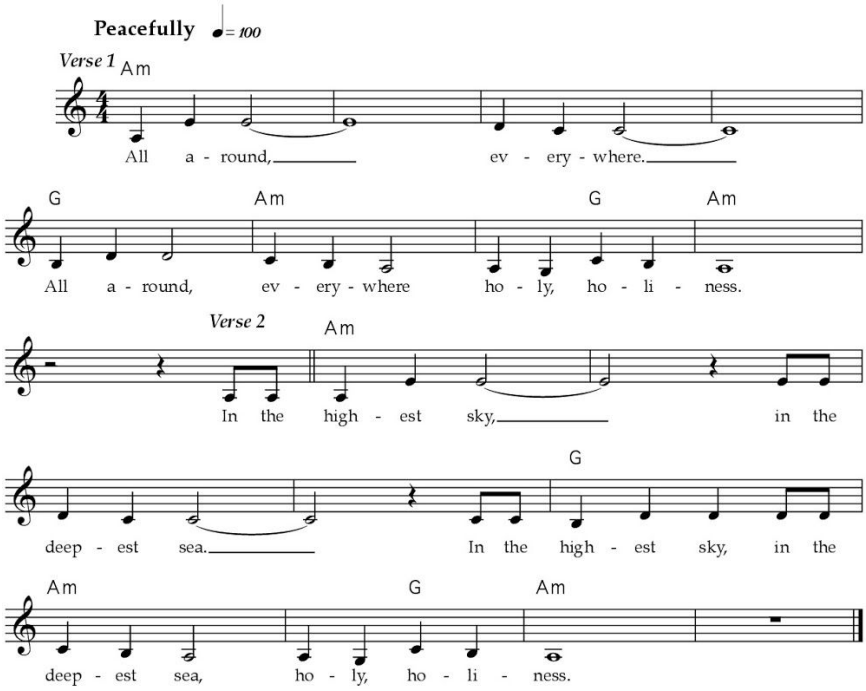



2
Hal'luYAH
39
G C
Am Dm
G C
Am Dm
Toot toot toot toot toot toot toot toot toot toot toot! Praise God with the cym-bal crash
43
Em Am
Am Dm
G C
Am Dm
G C
CRASH! CRASH! CRASH! CRASH! Praise God with your loud-est-voice! LA LA LA LA LA LA
48
Am Dm
G C
Am Dm
Em Am
LA LA LA LA LA! Kol ha-n'-sha-ma t'-ha-leil YAH! Ha-l'-lu, ha-l'-lu,
52
Am Dm
G C
Am Dm
Em Am
Am Dm
ha-l'-lu-YAH! Kol ha-n'-sha-ma t'-ha-leil YAH! Ha-l'-lu, ha-l'-lu, ha-l'-lu-YAH!
57
Em Am
Am Dm
Em Am
Am Dm
Ha-l'-lu, ha-l'-lu, ha-l'-lu-YAH! Ha-l'-lu, ha-l'-lu, ha-l'-lu-YAH!

APPENDIX E

Holy, Holiness

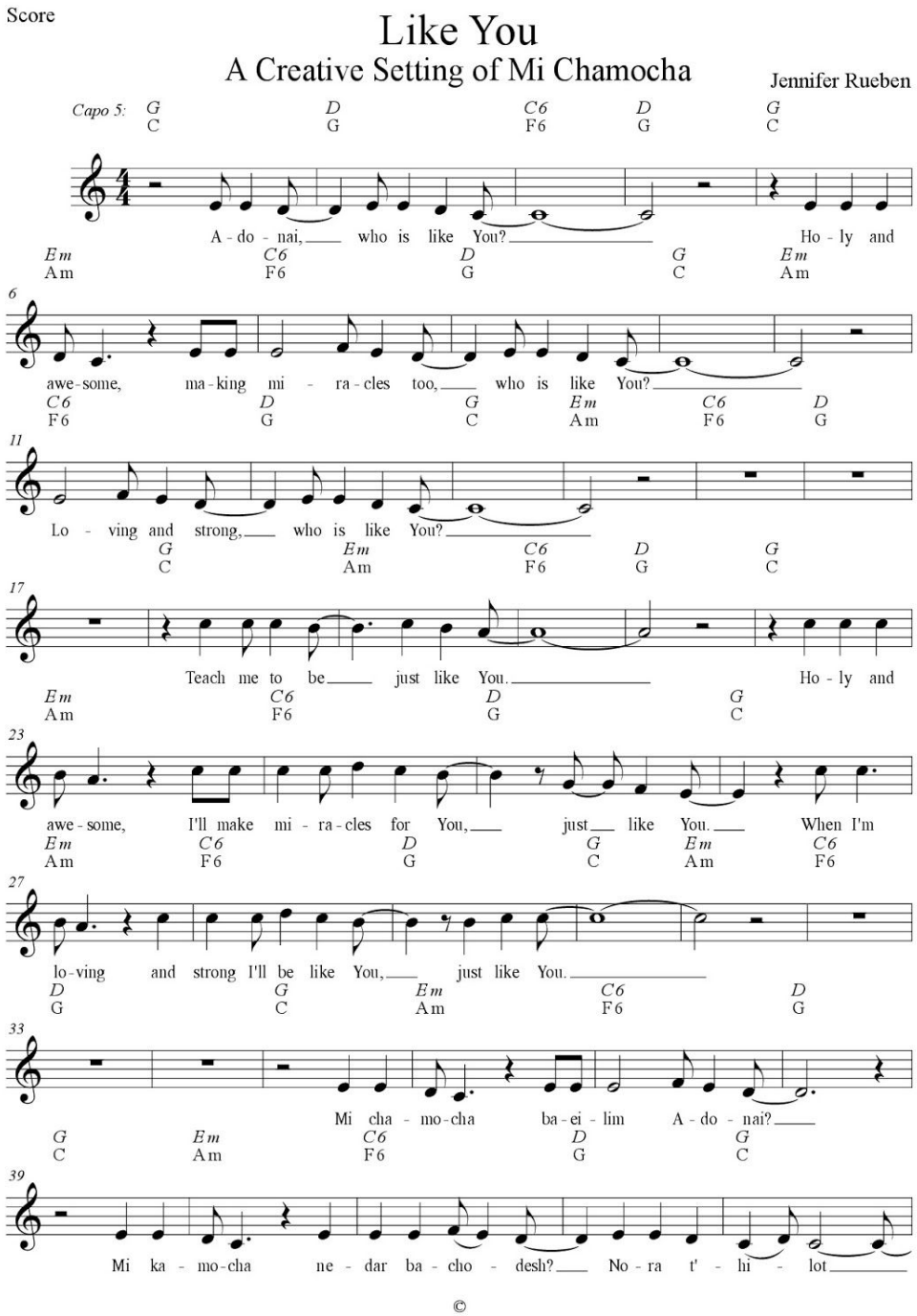
Ellen Allard

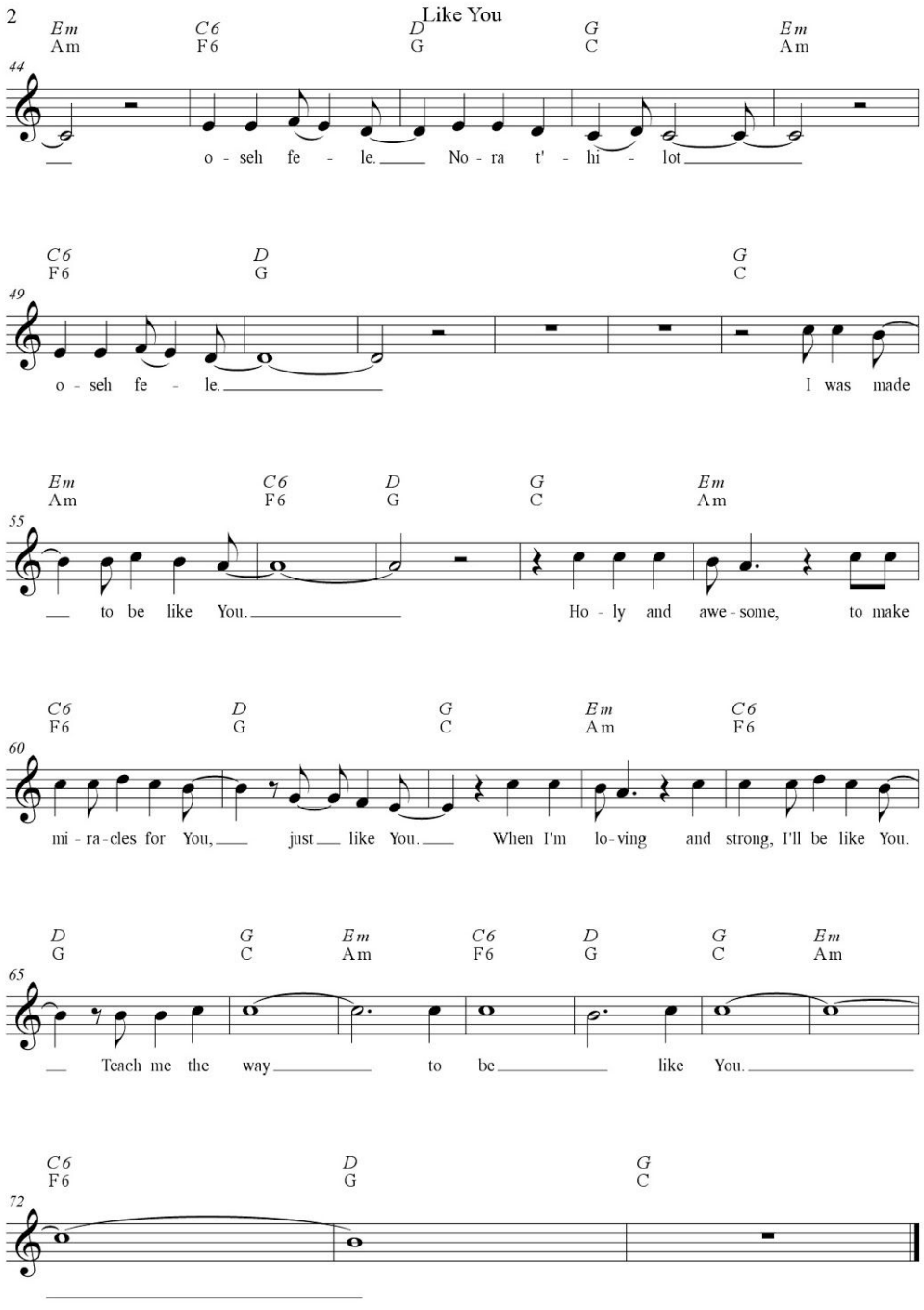


ADDITIONAL VERSES
(Underlined syllables fall on first beat)

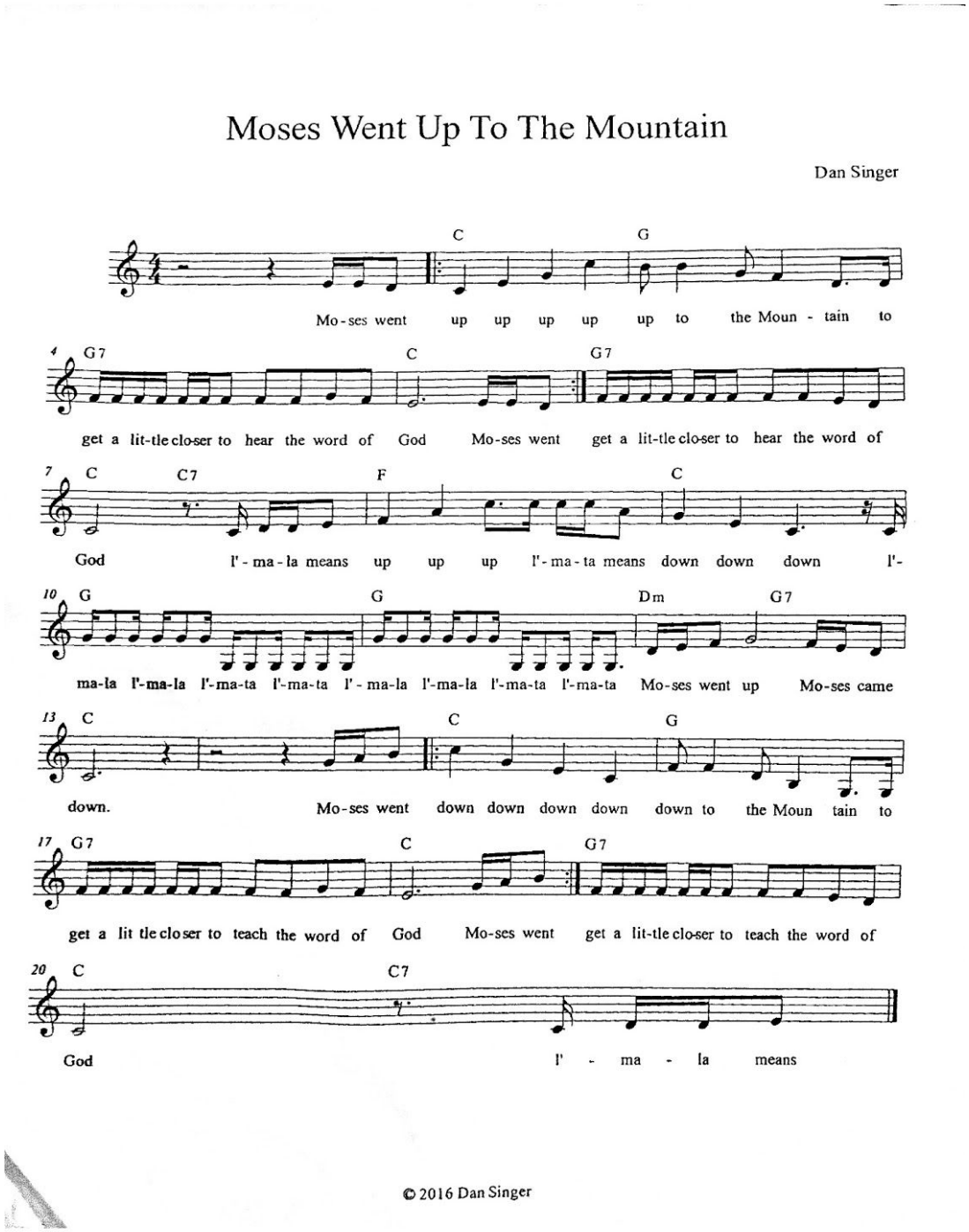
3. In my heart ..., in your soul ...
4. In all we do ..., in all we are ...
5. Every step ..., every breath ...
6. As with me ..., so with you ...
7. All around ..., everywhere ...

APPENDIX F

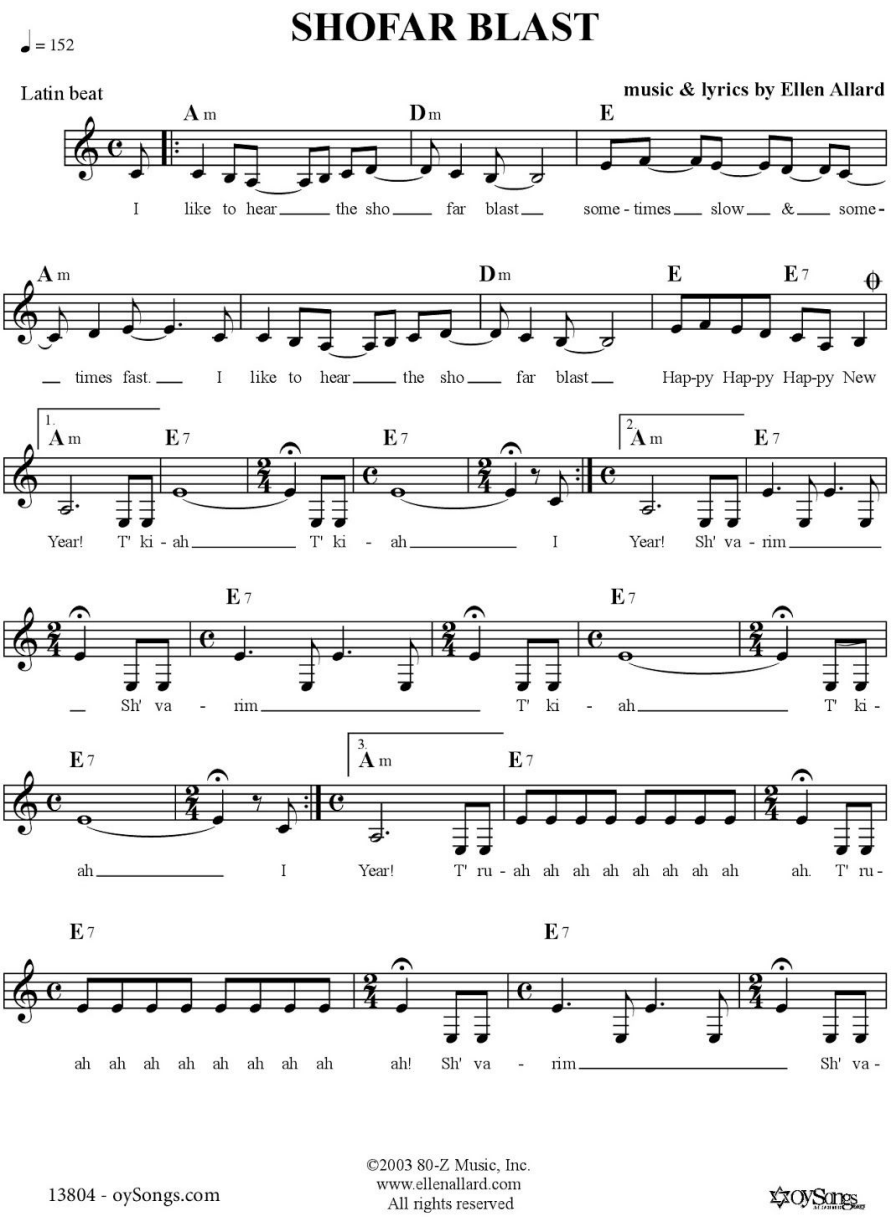

Score
Like You
A Creative Setting of Mi Chamocha
Jennifer Rueben
Capo 5:
A - do - nai, who is like You? Ho - ly and
awe-some, ma-king mi - ra-cles too, who is like You?
Lo - ving and strong, who is like You?
Teach me to be just like You. Ho - ly and
awe-some, I'll make mi - ra-cles for You, just like You. When I'm
lo-ving and strong I'll be like You, just like You.
Mi cha - mo-cha ba-ei - lim A - do - nai?
Mi ka - mo-cha ne - dar ba - cho - desh? No - ra t' - hi - lot
©


2
Like You
Em
Am
C6
F6
D
G
G
C
Em
Am
44
o - seh fe - le. No - ra t' - hi - lot
C6
F6
D
G
G
C
49
o - seh fe - le. I was made
Em
Am
C6
F6
D
G
G
C
Em
Am
55
to be like You. Ho - ly and awe - some, to make
C6
F6
D
G
G
C
Em
Am
C6
F6
60
mi - ra - cles for You, just like You. When I'm lo - ving and strong, I'll be like You.
D
G
G
C
Em
Am
C6
F6
D
G
G
C
Em
Am
65
Teach me the way to be like You.
C6
F6
D
G
G
C
72

APPENDIX G


Moses Went Up To The Mountain
Dan Singer
C G
Mo-ses went up up up up up to the Moun - tain to
4 G7 C G7
get a lit-tle clo-ser to hear the word of God Mo-ses went get a lit-tle clo-ser to hear the word of
7 C C7 F C
God l' - ma - la means up up up l' - ma - ta means down down down l'-
10 G G Dm G7
ma-la l'-ma-la l'-ma-ta l'-ma-ta l' - ma-la l'-ma-la l'-ma-ta l'-ma-ta Mo-ses went up Mo-ses came
13 C C G
down. Mo-ses went down down down down down to the Moun tain to
17 G7 C G7
get a lit tle clo ser to teach the word of God Mo-ses went get a lit-tle clo-ser to teach the word of
20 C C7
God l' - ma - la means
© 2016 Dan Singer

APPENDIX H


SHOFAR BLAST
♩ = 152
Latin beat
music & lyrics by Ellen Allard
Am Dm E
I like to hear the sho far blast some-times slow & some-
Am Dm E E7
times fast. I like to hear the sho far blast Hap-py Hap-py Hap-py New
1. Am E7 E7 2. Am E7
Year! T' ki-ah T' ki-ah I Year! Sh' va-rim
E7 E7
Sh' va-rim T' ki-ah T' ki-
E7 3. Am E7
ah I Year! T' ru-ah ah ah ah ah ah ah ah ah. T' ru-
E7 E7
ah ah ah ah ah ah ah ah ah! Sh' va-rim Sh' va-
13804 - oySongs.com
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www.ellenallard.com
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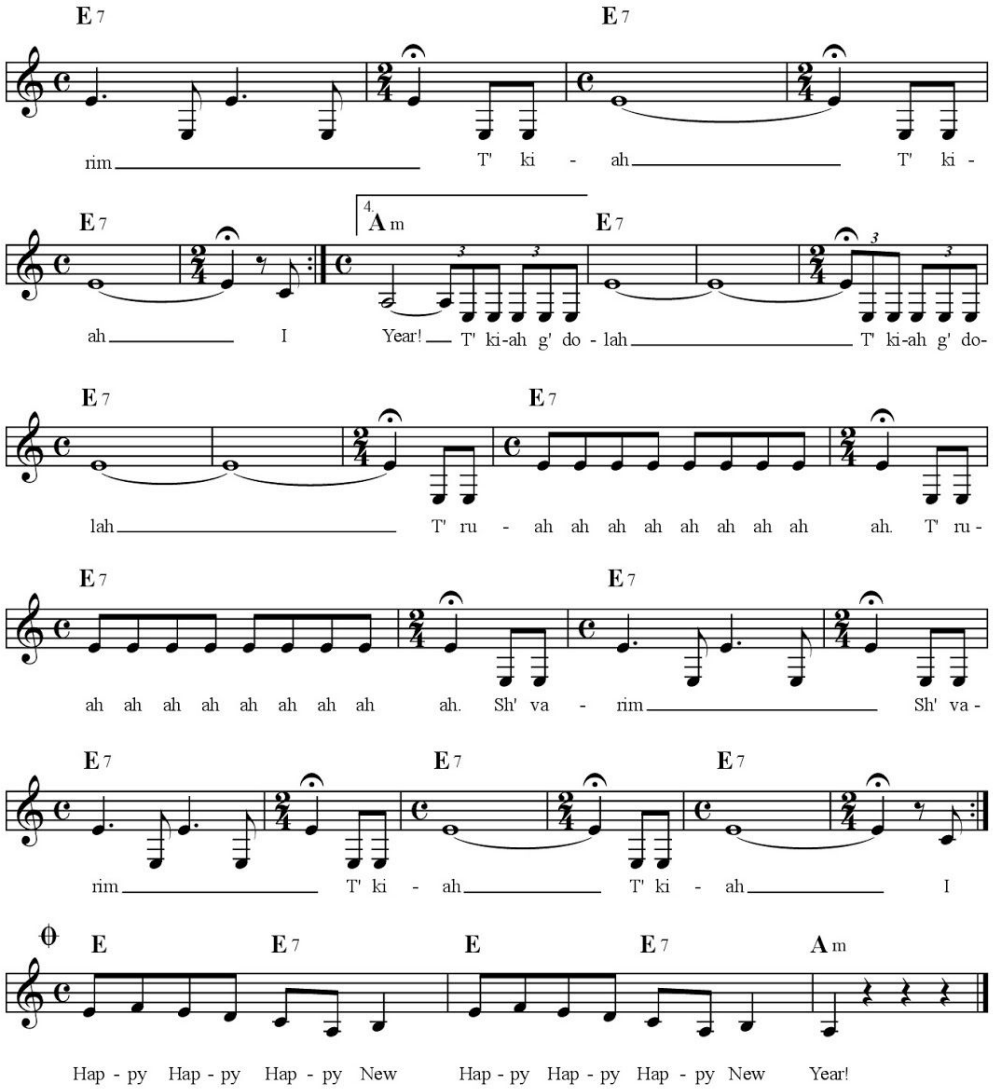
oySongs



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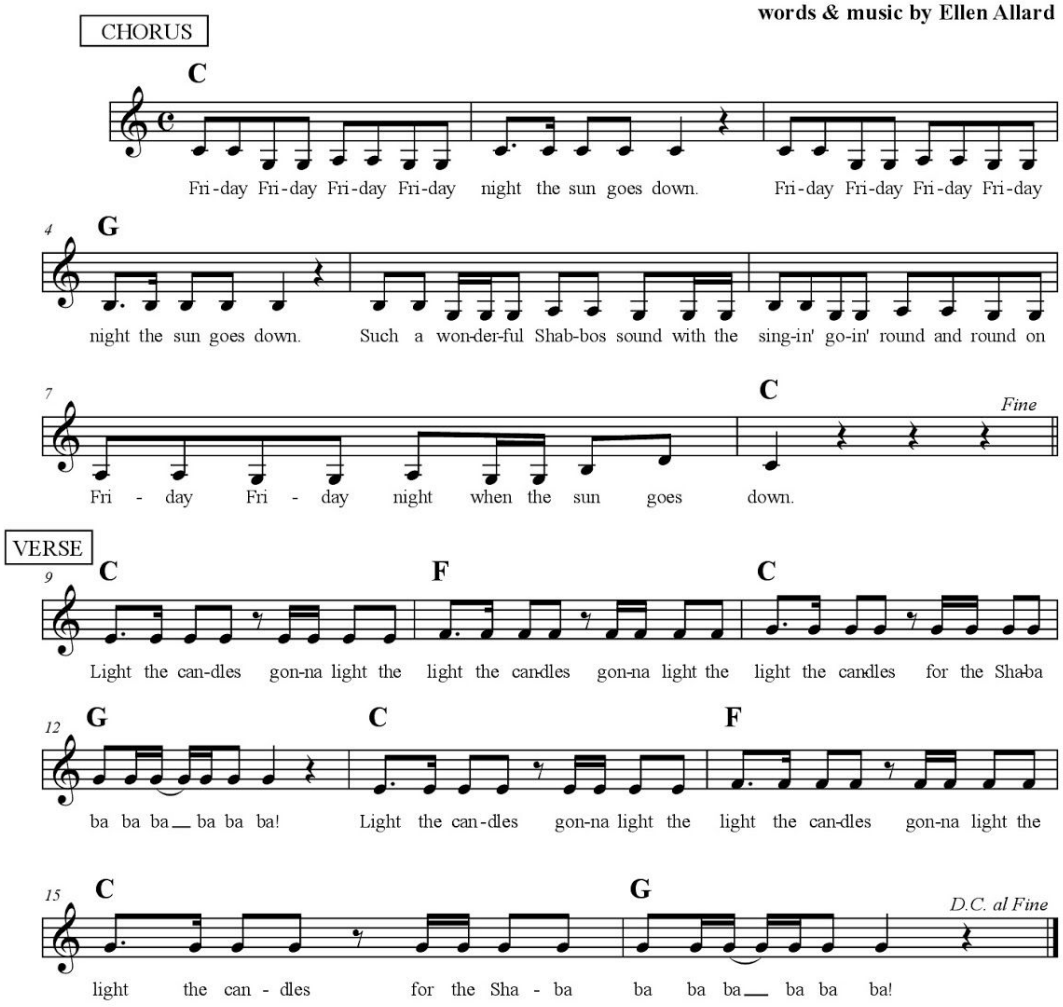
APPENDIX I

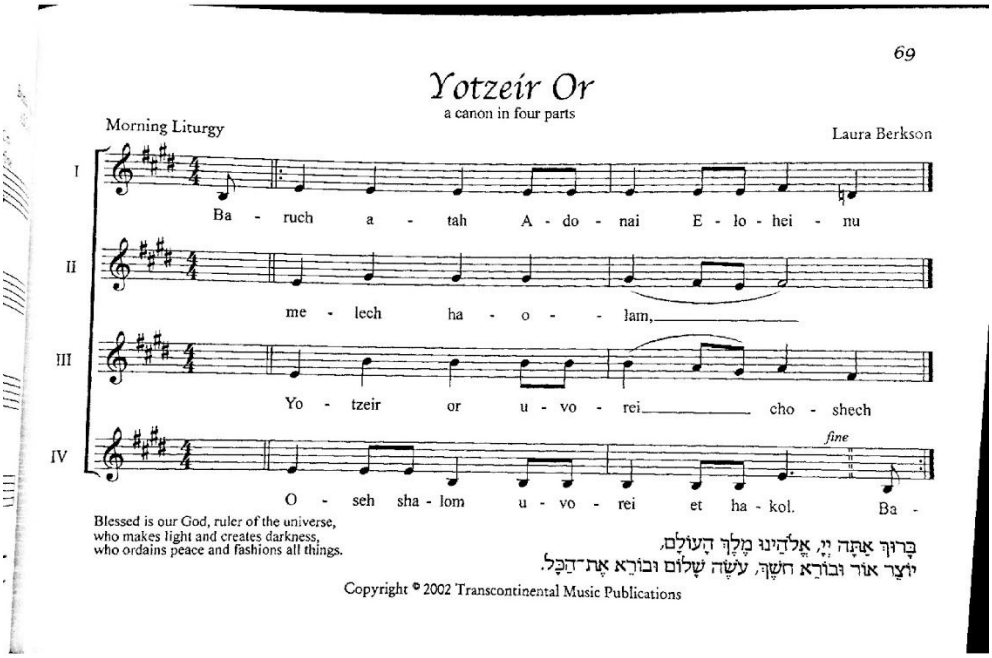
WONDERFUL SHABBOS SOUND

words & music by Ellen Allard



Verse 2: Pour the wine...
Verse 3: Braid the challah...
Verse 4: Say the blessings....

APPENDIX J



69

Yotzeir Or

a canon in four parts

Morning Liturgy

Laura Berkson

I Ba - ruch a - tah A - do - nai E - lo - hei - nu

II me - lech ha - o - - lam,

III Yo - tzeir or u - vo - rei cho - shech

IV O - seh sha - lom u - vo - rei et ha - kol. Ba -

fine

Blessed is our God, ruler of the universe,
who makes light and creates darkness,
who ordains peace and fashions all things.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ, עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם וּבוֹרֵא אֶת־הַכֹּל.

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