



## Sensory Story

# A Song of Gladness by Michael Morpurgo and Emily Gravett

From a blackbird in a Devon garden to leopards in the African savanna, hibernating bears and chimpanzees high in the forest canopy, *A Song of Gladness* reminds us all of our connection with nature, and with each other, and the urgent need for us to join together in caring for the planet and every creature in it.



# Using the guide

A few gentle reminders before you get going:

- Use as much or as little as you like
- Choose what suits your child
- There's no right or wrong way to go
- Always follow the child's preferences
- Skip smells/textures if not appropriate
- Adult support is recommended for groups

# Version one

Choose from two versions to add some sensory interest when you're listening to the audiobook in your classroom. One prop or action from each section will be plenty – it is also fine to have some sections without any props.

It is not necessary to fit the props to the exact timings of the audiobook. For example, if you are using a swallow puppet, you can start flying your puppet around the room before the swallow is mentioned in the recording.

**Part one: From “...A Song of Gladness” to “...across the stream.”**

***Track 3, 00:40 – 01:25***

Blackbird – use a bird call whistle or look online for soft toy blackbirds that make a blackbird noise when you squeeze them.

**Part two: From “...Kingfisher was there...” to “...and they all agreed...”**

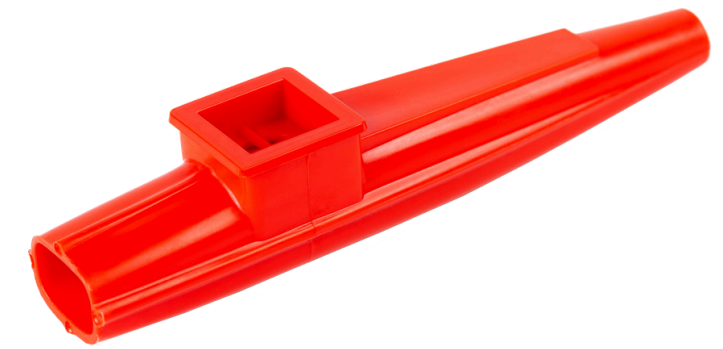
***01:25 – 01:50***

Swallow (or one of the other birds mentioned) – cut a simple swallow shape out of card and tape this to a stick to make a swallow puppet. Swoop this around your classroom. (There are also soft toy swallows available that make a swallow noise when squeezed.)

### **Part three: From “...bleating it out to bees...” to “...in wild enthusiasm.”**

**01:50 - 02:10**

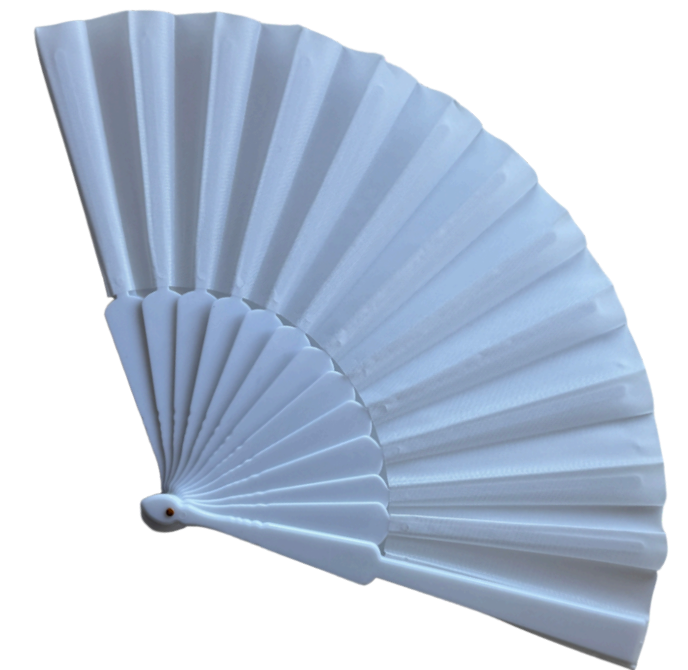
- Bees – use a kazoo to make the buzz of the bees
- Grasshopper – use a small guiro
- Mice – use your index and middle finger to make a ‘scurrying mouse’ run up the arm of a child.



### **Part four: From “...High above in the skies...” to “...the best they ever heard.”**

**02:10 - 02:52**

- Use a folding fan to make the wind.
- Whales, dolphins, porpoises and fish – make puppets out of card in the same way as for the swallow. Swim these around your classroom
- Use a large piece of blue cloth for the sea and ripple this to make waves.



## **Part five: From "...In rivers..." to "...parched plains..."**

**02:52 - 03:40**

- Make card puppets as above for the salmon and/or sea trout. Make these leap.
- Use a dark coloured scarf and hold this over the heads of your learners to make the dark dens.
- Use a seed shaker for the sound of the mountain streams.



## **Part six: From "...where lions roared..." to "...across the wide savannah..."**

**03:40 - 04:00**

- Try some dried grasses for the plains.
- Use a handwarmer tied into a little drawstring bag for the heat of the savannah.



**From "...Then storm lifted..." to "...sleeping nests."**

**04:00 - 04:12**

- Use a rain stick or shakers for the rain.



**From "...And crocodile..." to "...he had ever heard."**

**04:12 - 04:56**

- Make some big crocodile jaws with your arms and snap these shut.
- Stamp your feet like the oryx.

## Part nine: From "...Back in the garden..." to "...across the universe."

**04:56 - 06:39**

- Blackbird noise again.
- If you have made card puppets use these again at the end as all the animals join in.
- Try using a gentle recording of a large choir singing at the end. Or sing a song with your class. Try throwing some streamers or confetti at the end.



# Version two

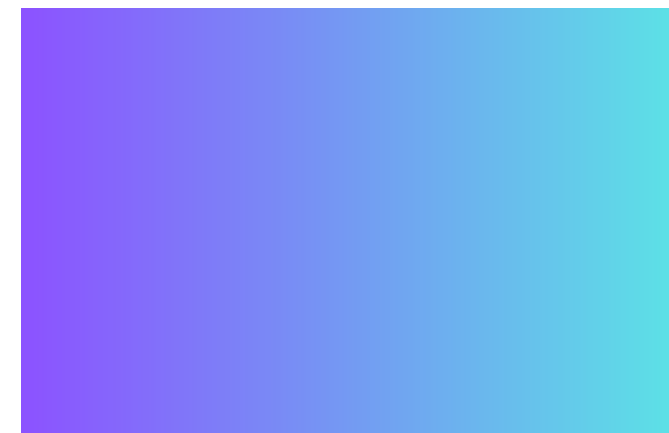
As you listen to the story, try using different coloured scarves to reflect the different landscapes. If you use silky scarves, you will be able to fit all into a small drawstring bag with a narrow opening. You can then pull them out one by one as you listen. Put the scarf you want to finish the story with first, then the second last one...and so on. (A fabric pouch for a pair of glasses works well for this bag.) Don't worry too much about having exactly the right colours!

**Part one: From "...A Song of Gladness" to" ...across heaving seas."**  
***Track 3, 00:40 - 02:20***

Shades of green for the woods and the fields.

**Part two: From "...across heaving seas..." to "...Eagles soaring above..."**  
***02:20 - 03:00***

Shades of blue for the seas.



**Part three: From "...Eagles soaring above..." to "...carried over the sea..."**

**03:00 - 03:35**

Black for the dark dens.



**Part four: From "...carried over the sea..." to "...across the wide savannah..."**

**03:35 - 03:58**

Shades of orange and yellow for the plains.



**Part five: From "...Then storm lifted the idea..." to "...sleeping nests..."**

**03:58 - 04:13**

Shades of grey and blue for the rain.



**Part six: From "...And crocodile..." to "...the very thought of it."**

**04:13 - 04:23**

Shades of brown for the swamp.

**Part seven: From "...Howler monkeys and gibbons..." to "...he had ever heard."**

**04:23 - 04:56**

Shades of yellow for the sun and the desert.

**Part eight: From "...Back in the garden..." to "...And then he began to sing."**

**04:56 - 05:05**

Shades of green for the garden.

**Part nine: From "...The whole carnival of animals heard him..." to "...across the universe."**

**05:05 - 06:39**

Multi-coloured scarves for the ending.





**Thanks for  
listening!**

**We hope you had fun. Special thanks to My  
Kind of Book for compiling the sensory ideas.**