

# Chapter 25

## Solo Vocal Music

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The first twenty-four chapters of this course have introduced you to the principles of braille music transcription in single-line instrumental format. Now you will study the line-by-line format for solo vocal music.

Printed music for voice includes the lyrics, the melody, and the keyboard accompaniment. In choral music, all the voice parts (SATB) and the accompaniment are aligned vertically. In braille, the vocal solo or choral part is transcribed separately from the accompaniment and the other voice parts. The accompaniment, if desired, is brailled separately in its own format, which will be presented in Part 2 of this course.

### 25.1 The Line-by-Line Parallel

In line-by-line format, each line of text is exactly paired with a line of music—each note representing a syllable of the text. This pair of lines is called a “parallel.” The line of words begins in cell 1. Below this is the line of music, beginning in cell 3. As in single-line instrumental format, the first note of every line of music must have an octave mark. No attempt is made to align the words and music within the parallel.

Uncontracted UEB is used for the words and will be used for all examples, drills and exercises in this course. Contracted UEB is permissible, however, at the request of an individual user, or in hymnals, chants, and elementary school materials.

Example 25.1.1

The image shows a musical staff in 3/4 time with a treble clef. The melody consists of quarter notes: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. Below the staff are the lyrics: "Are you go-ing to Scar-bor-ough Fair? Pars - ley, sage, rose - mar - y and thyme;". Below the lyrics is a Braille transcription of the music. The Braille is arranged in two columns. The first column contains the lyrics and the second column contains the musical notation. The Braille notation uses a 6/8 time signature (C-clef, 3/4 time) and includes an octave mark (C-clef, 3/4 time) for the first note of each line. The lyrics are transcribed in uncontracted UEB.

To facilitate memorization and understanding, the transcriber must carefully choose the point of division between parallels. When possible, conform the text line to a logical phrasing of the words. Always try to keep the number of words per line relatively short so that the braille reader can readily match the syllables to the music. As a result, the music line may frequently end with a partial measure.

Example 25.1.2

The musical score is written on two staves in G major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The first staff contains the first line of music with lyrics: "If God will, thou shalt wake when morn - ing is nigh;— If God". The second staff contains the second line of music with lyrics: "will, thou shalt wake when\_ morn - ing is nigh." A triplet of eighth notes is marked with a '3' above it, occurring on the word "morn" in the second line.

The Braille transcription consists of two systems of two lines each. The first system corresponds to the first line of the musical score, and the second system corresponds to the second line. Each system contains a line of Braille music followed by a line of Braille text. The text is aligned with the musical notes, with hyphens used for syllables that span across notes. The Braille uses standard musical notation for notes, rests, and lyrics.

When the text is difficult to divide into phrases, end the text at a place in the music that will be easy to follow, for example, at the end of a measure or after a whole beat.

Either text or music may be continued into a run-over line or lines, but run-overs of both text and music must not occur in the same parallel. Each run-over line begins in cell 5. Run-overs are exceptional—normally each parallel contains only one braille line of words and one braille line of music.

Example 25.1.3

For I've come to Lu' - si - an - a for to see my Pol - ly An - na, Sing - in'  
 pol - ly wol - ly doo - dle all the day.

Braille transcription of the lyrics above.

The lines of the parallel must not be separated. If a parallel at the bottom of a braille page cannot be completed on that page, move the entire parallel to the top of the next braille page.

The parallel must include relevant indications of expression and execution, even if the printed score shows them in the accompaniment or at some other point outside the printed vocal staff.

**25.2 More About the Lyrics**

The hyphens that are used in print to separate the syllables of a word are not shown in braille, except for nonsense syllables or words which require unusual pronunciation. Occasionally, a word line may need to be divided between syllables if a new section of music or rehearsal letter begins on a partial word. In this case, the literary hyphen (dots 36) is used according to normal UEB practice.

In an English-language context, accented letters in foreign words are shown by the UEB symbols. In a foreign-language context, the accented letters and unique punctuation of that language are used. Any such characters that are used in the transcription must be listed on the Special Symbols page.

Example 25.2.1

Hol - di - ri - di - a, hol - di - ri - a.

Braille transcription of the lyrics above.





When the text is repeated more than twice, the text is preceded by a braille number and the text repeat sign to show the number of repetitions. A single repeat sign follows the text at the end. It is crucial to remember that the brailled number indicates the number of repetitions, not the total number of times the text is sung.

### Example 25.5.3

The image shows a musical staff in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. The melody consists of six measures: 'Row,' (quarter), 'row,' (quarter), 'row,' (quarter), 'row,' (quarter), 'row' (quarter) with a slur over the next two notes, and 'hard!' (quarter). Below the staff is a two-line Braille transcription. The first line contains the lyrics 'Row, row, row, row, row' and the second line contains 'hard!'. The Braille uses word signs and repeat signs to indicate the repetition of the word 'row'.

If the lyrics are contracted for special transcriptions, the contracted word "in" or any word beginning or ending with "in" must not be used in a series of words, but may be used when the word "in" stands alone within the text.

## 25.6 Measure Numbers and Rehearsal References

Measure numbers are not routinely brailled in vocal transcriptions but can be very advantageous. They are particularly helpful when the words are repetitious, when the piece is long and complex, or when the singer is being assisted by a teacher or accompanist who is also using a braille score. A measure number at the beginning of a new section of music, or at the top of a new braille page, is also helpful.

Measure numbers are placed at the beginning of the word line. A single blank cell separates the measure number from the continuing text. As in single-line instrumental format, the measure number is followed by dot 3 if the measure is being continued from the previous parallel. It is not necessary to show a measure number for each parallel or to follow printed numbers that might occur at the beginning of each line.

A rehearsal reference marking that is an actual measure number is placed at the beginning of the word line and does not require word signs. A rehearsal marking that is either a letter or a sequential number must be placed in word signs at the margin above the word line of the parallel.







## 25.9 Proofreading Vocal Music Transcriptions

To effectively proofread (and transcribe) a vocal solo or extracted vocal part, think of the piece as if you were singing it. This strategy will help you to account for all the syllabic slurs, as well as logical divisions between parallels.

Edit both the text line and the music line carefully. Imagine that you are the braille-reading singer who is learning a completely new solo or choral part. Your transcription may well spell the difference between frustration and success!

## 25.10 Review of the Order of Signs

### Preceding the note:

- forward-repeat sign
- first or second ending sign
- reminder tie
- simple word-sign expression or abbreviation
- line of continuation sign
- opening bracket slur
- music comma
- triplet or irregular-grouping sign
- larger or smaller value sign
- up-bow or down-bow
- mute sign
- accidental(s) for ornament (upper before lower)
- ornament
- signs of expression or execution that precede a note  
(staccato or staccatissimo, accent, tenuto)
- accidental
- octave mark

### Following the note:

- dot
- finger mark
- unmute (open sign)
- fractioning or tremolo sign
- fermata
- single slur, opening doubled slur
- closing bracket slur
- tie
- termination sign for line of continuation or "hairpin"
- breath mark
- terminal music comma
- double bar, backward-repeat sign, measure division, or in-accord
- music hyphen

## Drills for Chapter 25

(Correct transcriptions of these drills are at the end of this chapter)

### Drill 25.1

**Moderato**

I dream of Jean - nie with the light brown hair,  
Borne like a va - pour on the sum - mer air;

### Drill 25.2

Baa, baa, black sheep, have you an - y wool? Yes, sir,  
yes, sir, three bags full: One for my mas - ter and one for my  
dame, and one for the naugh - ty boy that lives in the lane.

### Drill 25.3

*Please transcribe the Alto part from the music in **Example 25.8.1***

### Drill 25.4

**With gusto**

*mf* Scot - land's burn - ing! Scot - land's burn - ing! Look out! Look out!  
*ff* Fire! Fire! Fire! Fire! Pour on wa - ter! Pour on wa - ter!

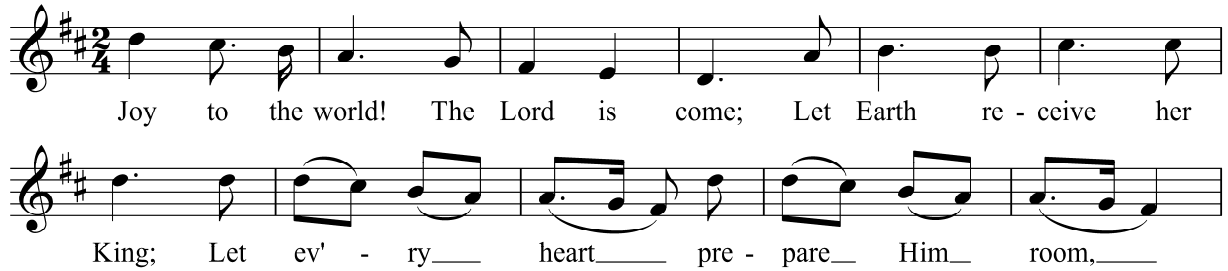
### Drill 25.5

Christ the Lord is ris'n to - day, Al - le - lu - ja!

## Exercises for Chapter 25

(Submit the following exercises to your instructor in BRF file format)

### Exercise 25.1



Joy to the world! The Lord is come; Let Earth re - ceive her  
King; Let ev' - ry heart pre - pare Him room,

### Exercise 25.2



I am bound for the prom - ised land, Bound for the prom - ised  
land. Oh, who will come and go with me? I am bound for the prom - ised land.

### Exercise 25.3

*Please transcribe the Soprano part from the music in **Example 25.8.1***

### Exercise 25.4



Beau - ti - ful dream - er, wake un - to me;  
Star - light and dew - drops are wait - ing for thee.

### Exercise 25.5

Are you sleep - ing, are you sleep - ing, Broth - er John,  
Broth - er John? Morn - ing bells are ring - ing  
Morn - ing bells are ring - ing, Ding, dong, ding, ding, dong, ding.



