Writing Worship Songs For Children

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Introduction

Worship songs are vital tools as we teach our children how to connect with God, and the biblical truths on which they can base their lives. Just as when writing "adult songs," it takes hard work to turn inspirational ideas into quality songs. We constantly need to strive for fresh lyrics, catchy tunes, and sound doctrine. Here are a few other tips you might consider.

Different Song Styles

Children's songs come in a variety of styles, and while energetic praise songs are important and often popular, you could also consider writing a simple worship or ministry song. Songs that specifically aim to teach truths or stories can play a vital role in helping children to learn the Bible. Having a breadth of song styles is so important for teachers as they plan worship that reinforces and complements their lessons.

Catchy Tunes & Funky Grooves

I would strongly encourage you to make sure you are familiar with contemporary musical styles so that you can write using grooves that the children relate to and adults enjoy. A strong beat will always help people to enter into the song, and a catchy melody is absolutely essential.

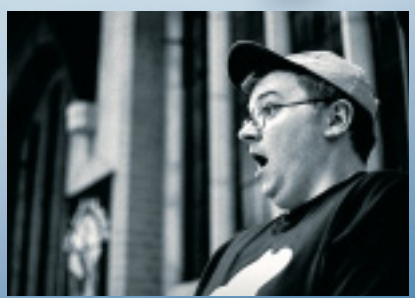
Themes & Language

I would favour using everyday language, and avoid religious or churchy jargon at all costs. This doesn't mean that the songs lack substance or depth. Children can understand deep concepts as long as the words don't put them off! If you do use a more grown up word, make sure that it is in keeping with the theme, and that the other lyrics in the song explain it's meaning.

A simple song with simple lyrics will always work (e.g. *I Like God, Father God*). Songs that use everyday kids' language (e.g. "cool, sorted, wicked") can be really effective too, but may have the potential to date! All children enjoy using actions (or 'hand motions'), so active words like clap, stamp, dance, run or shout can easily hook children into a song. Songs that use vivid or descriptive images will help to paint a memorable picture and fire the imagination (e.g. *You Won't Get To Heaven On The Back Of A Camel, I May Live In A Great Big City*).

Lastly, road-testing your songs with children is an absolute must. Do be prepared to re-write, depending on how well they go down. Go for it!





Nigel Hemming is songwriter based at South Birmingham Vineyard Church, UK where he is part of the team responsible for co-ordinating worship and children's ministry along with his wife Jo. They have two children, Rebekah and Zac, and enjoy Indian food, movies and family bike rides.

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