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# Sing A Song Of Sixpence



A “rags to riches” story with songs!



Written by  
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Cast in order of appearance:

Narrator 1

Narrator 2

Aunt (*needs to be mean and intimidating*)

Uncle (*he knows his place*)

Beadle

Gilligren

Messenger - could also double as Londoner in street scene

Old Man - could also double as Londoner in street scene

Carter 1- could also double as Londoner in street scene

Carter 2 - could also double as Londoner in street scene

Farmer - could also double as Londoner in street scene

Farmer's Wife - could also double as Londoner in street scene

Miller - could also double as Londoner in streets scene

Up to 8 Blackbirds (*They are required to dance. Costumes should have 'football shirt' type numbers, including 4 and 20 - these actors could also double, in different costumes, as the CHORUS*)

Guard 1

Guard 2

Servant 1

Servant 2

Chef

Butler

King

Queen

Chancellor

Lord 1

Lady 1

Lord 2

Lady 2

*There are 26 speaking parts, up to 8 dancers and singers required for The CHORUS and the BLACKBIRDS. 7 of the parts (above) could either double up as Londoners or other children could be used. So you could have a total cast of 41, if required.*

## MUSIC

*Backing tracks can be purchased and downloaded for a modest fee from various sources, as shown below. Or, you could source the original artist's recording from amongst parents/grandparents and just have the children sing along to it, as many schools do. If you cannot source them from amongst the school community, then Amazon sell very cheap downloadable MP3 tracks for hundreds of thousands of songs. These can be purchased, downloaded on to a computer and then burnt on to a CD for performance. Below we give the song title and source of backing tracks. Where it says "Traditional" or "Disney", this means there is no backing track we know of, but it may be in sheet music form in your school or on a children's school music compilation CD.*

### Suggested Songs:

Tragedy (Bee Gees/Steps)	<a href="http://www.ameritz.com">www.ameritz.com</a>
Money, Money, Money (Abba)	<a href="http://www.ameritz.com">www.ameritz.com</a>
Hit the road, Jack (Ray Charles)	<a href="http://www.ameritz.com">www.ameritz.com</a>
Road to Nowhere (Talking Heads)	<a href="http://www.ameritz.com">www.ameritz.com</a>
Streets of London (Ralph McTell)	<a href="http://www.ameritz.com">www.ameritz.com</a>
(Working) 9 to 5 (Dolly Parton)	<a href="http://www.ameritz.com">www.ameritz.com</a>
Food, glorious food (Oliver)	<a href="http://www.successfulsinging.com">www.successfulsinging.com</a>
500 Miles (The Proclaimers)	<a href="http://www.ameritz.com">www.ameritz.com</a>

**SING A SONG OF SIXPENCE**

**SCENE 1** - The home of Gilligren's Aunt and Uncle.

*(A simple representation of a home - table, two chairs, empty fireplace with rough rug in front.. AUNT and UNCLE sit at the table. Other props as mentioned in the script. (SEE PRODUCTION NOTES) NARRATORS could have a lectern, or similar at one side of the stage.)*

*(CHORUS on stage for song, exit after.)*

**Song 1** - Tragedy (Bee Gees/Steps) - *(Everyone who is on stage)*

*Here I lie*

*In a lost and lonely part of town*

*Held in time*

*In a world of tears I slowly drown*

*Goin' home*

*I just can't make it all alone*

*I really should be holding you*

*Holding you*

*Loving you, loving you*

*Tragedy*

*When the feeling's gone and you can't go on*

*It's tragedy*

*When the morning cries and you don't know why*

*It's hard to bear*

*With no one to love you, you're*

*Goin' nowhere*

*Tragedy*

*When you lose control and you got no soul*

*It's tragedy*

*When the morning cries and you don't know why*

*It's hard to bear*

*With no one beside you, you're*

*Goin' nowhere*

*Night and day*

*There's a burning down inside of me*

*Burning love*

*With a yearning that won't let me be*

*Down I go*

*And I just can't take it all alone*

*I really should be holding you*

*Holding you*

*Loving you, loving*

*Tragedy*

*When the feeling's gone and you can't go on*

*It's tragedy*

*When the morning cries and you don't know why*

*It's hard to bear*

*With no one to love you, you're*

*Goin' nowhere*

*Tragedy*

*When you lose control and you got no soul*

*It's tragedy*

*When the morning cries and you don't know why*

*It's hard to bear*

*With no one beside you, you're*

*You're goin' nowhere*

**NARRATOR 1**

Welcome everyone. We are going to tell you a tragic story about a most unfortunate young boy called Gilligren.

**NARRATOR 2**

He became an orphan quite suddenly when his parents were both killed in a dreadful accident.

**NARRATOR 1**

Do you know what happened? You've got to tell me! Was it like, just, well, horrible?

NARRATOR 2

Too horrible for words, so let's move on.

NARRATOR 1

Overnight, Gilligren's life was turned upside down. With no one to love him, he was going nowhere.

NARRATOR 2 (*Sniffs, and dabs eyes with handkerchief*)

How terrible! It's so sad, I'm close to tears.

NARRATOR 1

Now compose yourself! We're here to help tell the story. Gilligren's life is not all doom and gloom.

NARRATOR 2

Sorry. Gilligren's aunt, his father's sister agreed to look after him, and this is where our story begins.

*(NARRATORS exit)*

AUNT (*generally dusting and tidying*)

He'll be coming this morning, this nephew of ours.

UNCLE

I'm not looking forward to this. Why did you offer to take him in?

AUNT

What else could we do? The boy has no other family.

UNCLE

Look, I know it was an act of great kindness when you offered to take him in, but I'm not so sure it's a good idea.

AUNT

I thought they might work something out for the boy before they brought him here.

UNCLE

Well it looks as though you were mistaken.

AUNT

You're not saying I was wrong, are you?

UNCLE

No! I wouldn't dare do that! You're never wrong! You're always telling me you're never wrong!

AUNT

As long as we understand each other. I've never been wrong, not ever, and don't you dare suggest otherwise.

UNCLE

Anyway, I don't know why you're tidying up. The boy won't expect too much.

AUNT

I'm not tidying for him, I'm tidying for me. I'm that sort of a person - tidy.

UNCLE

You're never happy unless you've got a duster in your hand.

AUNT

There's a place for everything - my mother used to say that. Everything in its place.

UNCLE

And I suppose that includes me?

AUNT

Of course it includes you! Where would you be without me?

UNCLE (*Sighs*)

And I'm always in the wrong.

AUNT

As long as that's understood, we'll get along fine.

*(Knock at the door)*

UNCLE

That'll be him, your nephew.

AUNT

Will you stop saying *your* nephew? He's our nephew.

UNCLE

I'll try to remember. I'd better answer the door.

AUNT

Well don't dilly dally, go and let the boy in! It's no weather for standing on the doorstep.

*(UNCLE exits and returns with BEADLE and GILLIGREN)*

BEADLE

Here's the boy! (*Shoves GILLIGREN forward*) Go on!

AUNT

Nothing to be afraid of. I don't bite - well, not often!

BEADLE

He's probably a bit shy. It really is very kind of you to offer the boy a home.

UNCLE

Well, that's what we are, very kind people.

BEADLE

I've warned him about his Ps and Qs, told him to be polite, and respectful, to do as he is told, and to be grateful.

AUNT

I should think so! Where would he be, if we hadn't agreed to take him in? I expect you've plenty to do?

BEADLE

What? Oh, you'd like me to go?

AUNT

No point in hanging around.

BEADLE

Well, I'll be off then. I'll see myself out.

AUNT

Best make a clean break of it. No time for a change of mind! We wouldn't want that!

BEADLE

Definitely not.

UNCLE

And thank you for taking the trouble to bring him here.

BEADLE

You'll have lots to talk about. His name's Gilligren, by the way, in case you forgot.

*(Exit BEADLE)*

UNCLE

Well here you are, and here we are. Your name is .... what did the Beagle call you?



GILLIGREN

Gilligren, my name's Gilligren.

AUNT

Well that's a funny name, you mark my words.

GILLIGREN

You mean, out of ten? I have to give your words a mark out of ten?

UNCLE

Now let's get one thing clear - it won't suit if you're too clever, son.

GILLIGREN

But I'm not your son.

AUNT

We both know that. It could have been the workhouse for you, so be grateful we've taken you in.

GILLIGREN

I am grateful, even though I don't know you yet. Perhaps we'll get along very well - I really hope so.

AUNT

Time will tell. You're quite a disruption. I don't take kindly to disruption.

UNCLE

So I had better warn you, this is no place for you to be clever. It wouldn't go down very well.

AUNT

Seen, and not heard, that's how I like children.

UNCLE

Well let's get to know each other then. You'd better call me uncle.

AUNT

And I'm your aunt. Your father's sister, God rest his soul.

GILLIGREN

Pleased to meet you both. (*Holds out hand*) Should we shake hands?

UNCLE

Shake hands? (*Ignores hand*) That's what posh people do, isn't it? Well, one thing you'll find out is that we're not posh.

AUNT

Not posh at all. But you certainly are a very polite little boy. Very well mannered, I should say.

UNCLE

The Beagle told him about his manners.

GILLIGREN

I didn't need telling. I've been brought up properly.

AUNT

No doubt. But that's all in the past. You're with us now, and no doubt things might be a bit different.

UNCLE

A bit strange, so to speak. Now how old are you, son? Sorry, Gilly - is it all right to call you Gilly?

GILLIGREN

I would prefer my full name - Gilligren, if it's not too much trouble.

UNCLE

I'll try and remember. Now you were going to tell us how old you are.

GILLIGREN

Oh, yes, I'm twelve, thirteen next birthday, and when I'm thirteen I'm going to have some attitude.

AUNT

Attitude? What's all that when it's at home? I don't like the sound of that!

GILLIGREN

You've never heard of attitude? It's when teenage boys stop being polite and respectful, and they don't talk any more, they just grunt.

UNCLE

I wouldn't recommend any of that, Gilly. Your aunty here wouldn't take kindly to attitude. It wouldn't do to upset her. Especially the grunting. That wouldn't go down well at all.

AUNT

We need to explain some rules.

UNCLE

So that we all get along, just like a happy family. You staying with us isn't permanent yet, it's sort of a trial.

AUNT

Yes, if it doesn't work out, if we don't take to you....

UNCLE

We'll send for the Beagle and he'll take you back. It's like a guarantee.

GILLIGREN

I don't want to go back! The workhouse is horrible!

AUNT

Then you'd better make sure this works.

GILLIGREN

I think I understand you perfectly. Now I'm sorry to say this, but I'm very hungry. I didn't have any breakfast.

AUNT

Well, I'm sorry but you've missed breakfast.

UNCLE

Perhaps something later?

GILLIGREN

Very well. Could you show me to my room please?

AUNT

Your room? What do you think this is? A hotel, and your room has an en-suite bathroom, a mini bar, widescreen TV and a balcony overlooking the pool?

UNCLE

It's a small cottage, Gilligren, as you might have noticed.

AUNT

There's only one bedroom, and that's for us.

UNCLE

The en-suite facilities are a long walk down the bottom of the garden, by the wood.

AUNT

You can sleep on the rug in front of the fire.

UNCLE

That's if we had a fire. But, first of all, we need to set you to work.

GILLIGREN

Work? But I thought I was a guest!

UNCLE

Well you thought wrong, didn't you!

AUNT

First of all, you can sweep the floor.

UNCLE

The brush is behind the door.

AUNT

Next, the windows need a clean. They haven't been done since...

UNCLE

They haven't been done since the house was built. You'll get the water from the stream.

AUNT

The bucket's by the door. It's only a short walk through the wood, about two miles.

GILLIGREN

Two miles? There and back?

UNCLE

No, two miles there.

AUNT

And it's about the same distance back. Funny that.

UNCLE

And your bucket will be heavy, seeing as it will be full of water, so it might seem further.

AUNT

Then you can cut some logs for the fire, and after that, the rhubarb patch needs digging.

GILLIGREN

That's rather a lot to remember.

AUNT

It's easy. Sweeping, water, windows, logs, rhubarb. There, I said it was easy. Off you go.

*(Exit AUNT and UNCLE)*

GILLIGREN

I never thought it would be like this. But still, I must be grateful, I mustn't grumble.

*(He starts sweeping. Enter MESSENGER on scooter, who scoots around )*

MESSENGER *(Sing-song voice)*

Have you heard the news? Have you heard the news?

GILLIGREN

What news is this?

MESSENGER

I'm a messenger, come all the way from London with a message. Are your aunt and uncle about? I'll deliver the message to you all together, it'll save repeating myself. I hate repeating myself. Repeating myself gets on my nerves, it does!

GILLIGREN

I'll get them. *(Calls)* Aunt! Uncle! There's a messenger, with a message.

*(Enter AUNT and UNCLE)*

MESSENGER

Special delivery! Special delivery, just for you!

AUNT

It's our Premium Bonds! It's the Lottery! We've won, and we're rich!

MESSENGER

Not exactly. In fact, it's not really just for you, that bit wasn't really true. It's for everybody, and it's not good news at all. It's about the King.

UNCLE

What's he gone and done now?

MESSENGER

Only.... wait for it! He's gone and died!

AUNT

Is that it? You dragged us out here just to tell us that? That the king is dead?

MESSENGER

That's my job. Delivering messages. It's not my fault the news is not what you were expecting. Now I can't stop. I've to tell lots of people, not just you.

UNCLE

There's nothing else?

MESSENGER

Oh, only the usual, what you'd expect. He's going to be succeeded by his son, and there's going to be a coronation in London, in two weeks' time. Now I've got to go. Bye!

*(MESSENGER scoots around before exit)*

AUNT

Well, what a lot of fuss about nothing. What difference is it going to make to us?

UNCLE

No difference at all.

GILLIGREN

But don't you think it's exciting? I mean, of course it's sad that the old King has died, but a new King? Don't you think it's going to be very special?

AUNT

Now what did royalty ever do for us?

UNCLE

Nothing, that's what they did, nothing. Not... a... thing.

GILLIGREN

Can we go?

AUNT

Where?

GILLIGREN

To London! To see the coronation?

UNCLE

Now don't be silly, Gilly. Silly Gilly - I like that!

AUNT

You've work to do my boy. Now get on with it, and I'll tell you later what you're going to do this afternoon.

GILLIGREN

This afternoon? I've only got this morning to do all that work?

UNCLE

Got it in one! Better get a move on! You don't want to be late for dinner.

*(Exit AUNT and UNCLE)*

GILLIGREN

I'm going to get some water. I'll do the sweeping later.

*(Exit GILLIGREN. Enter AUNT and UNCLE)*

AUNT

I do hope that nephew of yours isn't going to take us for granted.

UNCLE

Oh he's *my* nephew now ! Just because he's a bit workshy.

AUNT

It's a bit too early to say that he's lazy, but he's heading that way. You mark my words - that boy spells trouble.

UNCLE

He might be able to spell trouble, but he was late for breakfast! That wasn't a good start. And it looks like he will be late for lunch too.

AUNT

Just as well, as I haven't made him any.

UNCLE

He'll be hungry then, make no mistake.

AUNT

Here he comes now.

*(Enter GILLIGREN with a bucket of water.)*

GILLIGREN

I'm starving. What's for lunch please?

AUNT

Sorry, but you're too late. I've just cleared away. Are you thirsty?

GILLIGREN

Well, yes, I am. I've worked all morning.

UNCLE

There's nothing to drink. You should have had a drink when you were down by the stream getting some water.

AUNT

Is there water in your bucket?

GILLIGREN

Yes, but I've washed the windows. It's all dirty.

AUNT

Suit yourself. Don't say we didn't try. It's either that or nothing, unless you walk back to the stream.

GILLIGREN

I'm sorry, I mustn't grumble. Anyway, I met someone in the wood, and he said everyone was going to London to see the coronation.

UNCLE

Well that's not strictly true. Seeing as we aren't going, it's not right to say that everyone was going.

AUNT

Bit of a pedant, your uncle. Things have to be right, you see.

GILLIGREN

But I'd like to go.

AUNT

I'd like to be rich, and I know it isn't going to happen, so what's the point?

GILLIGREN

It's not fair! This is all about you! What about me?

UNCLE

Look Gilly, you've done nothing but grumble since you came to stay with us. Nothing seems to suit you, nothing we do is good enough.

GILLIGREN

I thought you were kind, that you would take pity on me, me being an orphan in tragic circumstances and all that.

AUNT

If you must know, we only took you in because we thought your parents might have left us some money, to help look after you. But they haven't, and that's why this isn't working out.

GILLIGREN

I'd still like to go to London. (*Thinks*) If I had sixpence.... if you gave me sixpence, I could leave you in peace, and go to London.

UNCLE

Sixpence! You must think we're made of money!

(*Enter CHORUS for song*)



SONG 2- Money, money, money (Abba) - (Everyone)

*I work all night, I work all day, to pay the bills I have to pay*

*Ain't it sad*

*And still there never seems to be a single penny left for me*

*That's too bad*

*In my dreams I have a plan*

*If I got me a wealthy man*

*I wouldn't have to work at all, I'd fool around and have a ball...*

*Money, money, money*

*Must be funny*

*In the rich man's world*

*Money, money, money*

*Always sunny*

*In the rich man's world*

*Aha-ahaaa*

*All the things I could do*

*If I had a little money*

*It's a rich man's world*

*A man like that is hard to find but I can't get him off my mind*

*Ain't it sad*

*And if he happens to be free I bet he wouldn't fancy me*

*That's too bad*

*So I must leave, I'll have to go*

*To Las Vegas or Monaco*

*And win a fortune in a game, my life will never be the same...*

*Money, money, money*

*Must be funny*

*In the rich man's world*

*Money, money, money*

*Always sunny*

*In the rich man's world*

*Aha-ahaaa*

*All the things I could do*

*If I had a little money*

*It's a rich man's world!*

*(Exit cast)*

AUNT (*Takes UNCLE to one side*)

Perhaps we shouldn't be too hasty! If Gilly went, and never, ever came back, it would be worth sixpence to help him on his way.

UNCLE

Ah! Good thinking! Sixpence now, and we never see him again, and we get back to normal, just like before.

AUNT

That's it. Me in the right and you in the wrong. So give him the money! It's only sixpence, and we shall be rid of him!

UNCLE

I like the way you're thinking. A growing lad will need feeding. He'll need clothes to wear and shoes on his feet.

AUNT

And then there's this attitude thingy when he turns thirteen. I can't be doing with that!

UNCLE

So spend now, to save later?

AUNT

That's right! Finding sixpence today will save loads of money in the future. Let him go!

UNCLE (*To GILLIGREN*)

Gilly. We do care about you, and want to help you if we can, but finding sixpence is going to be really hard. How about tuppence?

GILLIGREN

Not enough, sorry.

UNCLE

Three pence – a nice multi-sided three-penny bit. That's half a sixpence, you know?

GILLIGREN

Sixpence, it has to be sixpence, or I forget about London, and stay here with you.

AUNT (*Takes sixpence from her apron*)

You drive a hard bargain, Gilly. Here's sixpence.... but only on condition you promise never to return?

GILLIGREN

I promise! I promise I will never trouble you again. I'm going to London, to see the coronation. The streets of London are paved with gold. Fame and fortune await me!

AUNT

Big dreams, Gilly. I hope they work out, and you're not disappointed. But even if you're poor, hungry and homeless, remember you have promised never to return.

UNCLE

There's nothing more for you here, Gilly.

GILLIGREN

Never fear. I will not trouble you again. Goodbye, and thanks for - hang on! Just what did you do for me? No food, no drink, hard work without any thanks, and you made me sleep on the floor! So thanks - for nothing!

SONG 3- Hit the Road, Jack.

*Hit the road Jack and don't you come back no more, no more, no more, no more.*

*Hit the road Jack and don't you come back no more. (What you say?)*

*Hit the road Jack and don't you come back no more, no more, no more, no more.*

*Hit the road Jack and don't you come back no more.*

(GILLIGREN, Solo?) *Oh! Woman, oh woman, don't treat me so mean,*

*You're the meanest old woman that I've ever seen.*

*I guess if you said so*

*I'd have to pack my things and go. (That's right)*

*Hit the road Jack and don't you come back no more, no more, no more, no more.*

*Hit the road Jack and don't you come back no more.*

*Now baby, listen baby, don't-a treat me this-a way*

*Cause I'll be back on my feet some day.*

*Don't care if you do 'cause it's understood*

*You ain't got no money you just ain't no good.*

*Well, I guess if you say so*

*I have to pack my things and go. (That's right)*

*Hit the road Jack and don't you come back no more, no more, no more, no more.*

*Hit the road Jack and don't you come back no more.*

*Don't you come back no more.*

*(What you say)*

*Don't you come back no more*

*(Come on baby)*

*Don't you come back no more*

*(Exit GILLIGREN)*

UNCLE

There's gratitude for you! You take in an orphan off the streets, and what thanks do you get?

AUNT

It's all for the best. And he did do a morning's work.

UNCLE

Well I for one am glad to see the back of him.

AUNT

For once, and I hate to admit it, but this time just for once mind, I think you're right!

UNCLE

You mark my words - he'll not get far on sixpence. It's not exactly a fortune.

AUNT

The problem with money, is that you can only spend it once. Once it's gone, it's gone.

UNCLE

Sixpence will not last him long though. It's not as though it's a magic penny.

AUNT

You've done enough for him - we both have, and he wasn't very grateful. You might have been wasting your breath if you'd said anymore.

UNCLE

He might get in with the wrong crowd. I should have warned him about that.

AUNT

Stop worrying. What's done is done.

UNCLE

True! He might not have listened to me. Why should he? Didn't look the sort to take advice.

He'll just have to be careful.

AUNT

He's on his own now, and it was his choice, remember? But London's not a nice place, I've heard.

UNCLE

No point in worrying like you said. Fancy a cuppa? What will be, will be.

*(NARRATORS return)*

NARRATOR 1

So you see, Gilligren thought he'd landed on his feet, but staying with his aunt and uncle wasn't what he expected.

NARRATOR 2

It didn't work out, so he decided to move on.

NARRATOR 1

Was Gilligren jumping from the frying pan into the fire?

NARRATOR 2

I wonder if Gilligren fares any better as he sets out for London?

NARRATOR 1

There could be danger on the way, and London has a terrible reputation.

NARRATOR 2

What has Gilligren done?

END OF SCENE 1.