



# Skye Boat Song

TRADITIONAL SCOTTISH AIR

*Arranged by* CARYN WIEGAND NEIDHOLD

## Instrumentation

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Score	1
Violin I	8
Violin II	8
Violin III (Viola T.C.)	3
Viola	5
Cello	5
Bass	5
Piano (Rehearsal only)	1



## ABOUT THE ARRANGER

Caryn Wiegand Neidhold is a composer and arranger for student through professional ensembles. Her focus includes arrangements of hidden classical “gems” and composing music for eclectic styles, including fiddle, rock, and jazz. With an emphasis on learning technique through literature, her music always distributes musical challenges to all string sections - go violas!

Caryn’s background includes extensive work as a middle school educator, Suzuki teacher, and youth symphony conductor and coach. In addition, she has years of performance experience as a violist and violinist with orchestras, including the Reno Phil, Reno Chamber Orchestra, New World Symphony, Chautauqua Symphony Orchestra, and the Fairbanks Symphony. Having fun at fiddle camp, in rock bands, and in jazz bands fuels her love for bringing diverse music to young string orchestras. Ms. Neidhold enjoys composing commissioned works for all levels, writing articles for music education publications and presenting seminars for string educators.

## SKYE BOAT SONG

*Skye Boat Song* tells the story of the Scottish Bonnie Prince Charlie’s escape from British forces after the defeat on the Culloden battlefield in 1746 in a small boat at night in a storm. The melody to this song was borrowed from *Cuachag nan Craobh* (“Cuckoo of the Tree”), written by William Ross in the late 1700s, with the lyrics written over a hundred years later. Robert Lewis Stevenson created his own lyrics after deeming the lyrics by Sir Harold Boulton as “unworthy.” The melody and the many versions of the lyrics endure to this day.

### Sir Harold Boulton’s first stanza

*Speed, bonnie boat, like a bird on the wing  
Onward, the sailors cry!  
Carry the lad that’s born to be King  
Over the sea to Skye.*

### Robert Lewis Stevenson’s first stanza

*Sing me a song of a lad that is gone,  
Say, could that lad be I?  
Merry of soul he sailed on a day  
Over the sea to Skye.*

### NOTES TO THE CONDUCTOR

Playing time signatures besides common time is a good step for young orchestra. *Skye Boat Song* has engaging melodies and harmonies to usher students into the world of 3/4 time.

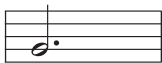
One of the biggest challenges with 3/4 time is uneven bowing with changing bow speeds and asymmetrical bow distribution. Pre-music exercises can include scales using the bowings presented in this piece. Bow speed discussions can be related to car speeds or bicycle/skateboard speeds. Highway, neighborhood, and school zone speeds can help students visualize how fast the bow needs to go for various notes.

In addition, uncontrolled bow weight can cause notes to stick out of the texture in 3/4 time. A good visualization that can help students with bow weight is the depth in a swimming pool - floating on top of the pool in a pool chair, swimming on the surface, swimming under the surface, and swimming on the bottom of the pool equated to arm weight on the bow.

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Here are some suggestions for pre-practice scales with a focus on bow speeds and bow weight:

- Dotted half notes. Helpful phrase: “slow slow bow.”



- Half note, quarter note. Helpful phrase: “slow bow, light.” Students need to return to the starting position at the end of the quarter note. Often, it is easy to use the bow wrapping as the target for the return.



- Hooked bow. Helpful phrase: “light stop stop.” Again, returning to the starting position is a good goal.



Other places that may need extra attention include:

- In m. 7-23 in Violin 2, Viola, Cello, and Bass work on a light bow and staying at a piano dynamic for the entire section.
- The “low” 2nd finger C-natural in m. 26, 34, & 37 can pose a challenge for the first Violins without prior finger pattern practice.
- Use of the 4th finger instead of open E in m. 23-39 for the first Violins.
- In measure 55-70, the harmony part will sometimes sound better with shorter notes.

Recordings are available on all major streaming services.

## Skye Boat Song

Traditional Scottish Air  
Arranged by CARYN WIEGAND NEIDHOLD  
(ASCAP)

**Andante**

Solo - freely

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Bass

Piano (Rehearsal Only)

**3/4**

*mf*

*p*

Free bow

Free bow

1 2 3 4 5 6

**7 Allegretto con espressione** ♩ = 92 - 108

Tutti

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Cello

Bass

Pno.

*mp*

7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14

15

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Cello

Bass

Pno.

15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22

23

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Cello

Bass

Pno.

23 24 25 26 27 28 29

31

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Cello

Bass

Pno.

30 31 32 33 34 35 36

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39

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Cello

Bass

Pno.

37 38 39 40 41 42 43

47

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Cello

Bass

Pizz.

Pno.

44

45

46

47

48

49

50

55

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Cello

Bass

*mp*

*p*

Arco

*p*

*mp*

Pno.

51

52

53

54

55

56

57



## 71 Allegretto con espressione ♩ = 92 - 108

71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78

79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86