

Alex Temple

Dragonflies (2020)

for one or more voices

commissioned by the Forage & Flourish Community Music Project

Who This Piece is For:

Dragonflies is for formally trained musicians, informally trained musicians, and non-musicians alike. It can be performed by one vocalist (referred to here as the SOLOIST) or by multiple vocalists (one SOLOIST and one or more BACKGROUND vocalists).

Directions for SOLOISTS:

The score consists of four collections of words referred to as MEMORY BANKS. These represent different areas of your mind as you try to retrieve a vague childhood memory. Imagine yourself located on the page, moving from one MEMORY BANK to another. You can pick any MEMORY BANK to start with.

While you're inside a particular MEMORY BANK:

1. Speak or sing all of the words you see, using one of the four vocal techniques described on the next page.
2. Stick with a single vocal technique for the entire MEMORY BANK.
3. You can deliver the words in any order, at any speed; feel free to repeat words, or come back to words you've already delivered.
4. Don't move on to another MEMORY BANK until you have spoken or sung every word in this one.

Once you've finished a MEMORY BANK:

1. Pause, as if you're assimilating what you just remembered
2. Pick another MEMORY BANK to move on to next.
3. You can either use the same vocal technique for the next MEMORY BANK, or switch to a different one.
4. MEMORY BANKS may be performed multiple times, but not twice in a row.
5. The piece ends when you have performed every MEMORY BANK as many times as you wish.
6. You may find it aesthetically pleasing to create a larger dramatic arc, e.g. by performing each MEMORY BANK slower (or faster, or quieter, or louder, etc.) than the previous one.

For each MEMORY BANK, you can choose from four vocal techniques:

1. Speak the words casually, with an air of wistful detachment.
2. Speak the words in a deliberate, precise, stylized, carefully enunciated fashion, as if you're recording audio samples for an ESL website.
3. Sing the words in a casual, speech-like style, each on a different pitch of your choosing.
4. Sing the words as described in #3, but limit yourself to a collection of 4 to 6 pitches. Some suggested pitch collections (but feel free to substitute your own):
 - C-E-G-G#
 - C-D#-E-G#-B
 - B-E-G#-A-Bb
 - G-B-C-E-F#-G#
 - C-D#-E-G-G#-B
 - C-D#-E-F#-G-Bb

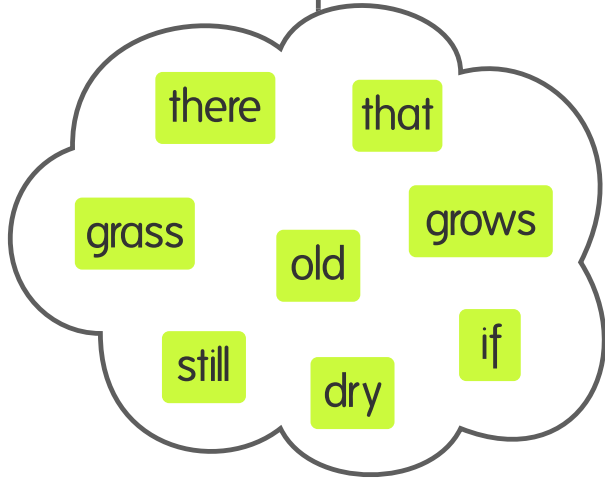
Directions: for BACKGROUND Vocalists:

When the SOLOIST is silent, be silent. When the SOLOIST is singing or speaking, pick one of the following four options and maintain it until the SOLOIST finishes the MEMORY BANK and pauses again:

1. Wordlessly hum one of the notes that the SOLOIST sings; if the SOLOIST is speaking, wordlessly hum a note of your choice.
2. Whisper all the words in whichever MEMORY BANK the SOLOIST is currently occupying, rapidly, repeating them in any order.
3. Try to duplicate whatever the SOLOIST is doing vocally in real time, as they're doing it.
4. Vocally imitate the sounds of wind, crickets, light rain, or other quiet natural sounds. (This is a good option for young children.)

If there is more than one BACKGROUND vocalist, they can choose whether to perform the same option or different options.

MEMORY BANK 1



MEMORY BANK 2



MEMORY BANK 3



MEMORY BANK 4

