

# Ukulele Yes!

The Ukulele Teacher's **eZine**

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## DOWN IN THE VALLEY

*Traditional, arr. James Hill*

### Teaching Notes

#### Focus On:

- Ensemble skills
- Note reading
- Keeping a steady tempo

#### Key Points:

- Teach students to sing and strum Down in the Valley before teaching them this instrumental arrangement. That way the melody will already be familiar to them.
- Sight-read the Uke III part as a warm-up. Note: there are only three pitches in the entire Uke III part (and two of them are open strings!).
- The teacher provides light, strummed accompaniment. This allows students to focus on their picking skills. You may challenge advanced students to pick Uke III and strum on beats 2 and 3 of each measure.
- Be clear with your tempo and stick to it! Students will rush the long notes if you allow them to. Rushing the tempo will undermine the spirit and dignity of this melody.

#### Additional Suggestions and Comments:

- Have your students sing their parts (to the lyrics of Down in the Valley or to the syllable "la" or "loo"). All students should try picking and singing their part at the same time. Advanced students should try singing their part while picking a different one!
- If your students are using the flatpick, this is an excellent tune for applying a tremolo technique on the long notes. Try a soft, 16th-note tremolo on the sustained notes.