

Chorus, n. (as defined by the OED)

1. a. *Gr. Antiq.* An organized band of singers and dancers in the religious festivals and dramatic performances of ancient Greece. **b.** The song sung by the chorus. **c.** In English drama, imitated or adapted from the chorus of Attic tragedy, as in *Gorboduc*, and Milton's *Samson Agonistes*; by Shakespeare and other Elizabethan dramatists reduced to a single personage, who speaks the prologue, and explains or comments upon the course of events.

2. fig. Applied to the company of planets, moving in rhythmical and regular order round the sun.

3. a. An organized band of singers, a choir; *spec.* the collective body of vocalists who sing the choral parts in an opera, oratorio, etc. **b.** A group of organ pipes or stops designed to be played together; a compound stop; also, the sound so produced.

4. a. The simultaneous utterance of song by a number of people; anything sung by many at once. **b. transf.** The simultaneous utterance of any vocal sounds, as speech, laughter, etc., by a number of persons; the sounds so uttered. **c. in chorus:** with simultaneous utterance; (singing, speaking, etc.) all together.

5. Mus. A vocal composition for a considerable body of singers, written in any number of parts, but most usually in four, each part being sung by a number of voices. A *double chorus* is a chorus written for two choirs, usually in eight parts.

6. a. The refrain or burden of a song, which the audience join the performer in singing. **c.** The main part of a modern popular song, as distinct from the introductory verse; also, an improvisation upon the main tune by one or more jazz musicians.

7. Comb., as *chorus-lady*, *-leading* vbl. n., *-like* adj. and adv., *-master*, *-singer*, *-singing*, *-teacher*, etc. **chorus-girl**, a young woman who sings or dances in the chorus of an opera, musical comedy, or revue.