

CAMARACA - TEACHER'S GUIDE

The primary goal of my trilingual children's tape, Camaraca, is to bring joy to listeners of all ages. The second is to familiarize North American children with music in two languages they may not speak (German and Spanish). By mixing songs they already know or understand with songs they don't know or understand, I hope to place the music in all three languages at the same level of importance.

Please mention to your class that Maya, the girl who sings solo parts on this album, speaks English, German, and Spanish fluently, and that many children around the world grow up speaking several languages at once. Encourage them to think of it not as something "weird," but as something positive. Perhaps you have children in the class who speak languages other than English? Encourage them to share songs and poems in their language with the class.

I hope you will teach your students some of the easier Spanish and German songs (**La pájara pinta, Chontaduro maduro, Rain Songs, Debajo'un botón, A la escuela, Camaraca, Abendstille überall**), or portions of the more difficult songs (the first verse of **Es führt über den Main**, and the refrain to **De las montañas venimos**.) If you can't find anyone to help you with pronunciations, let me know how to contact you. My name is Karin Stein ("La Negra Karin"), my e-mail is costari@iowatelecom.net

Some other activities which I hope the songs and poems on this album will promote, include:

Learning to appreciate the sound of a language you don't understand

Experimenting with rhythm patterns from other cultures as well as your own

Experimenting with various ways in which the body can be used as an instrument

Discussing cross-cultural themes in folk music

Making up songs

Discussing how music, rhythm, and dance become vehicles of communication among people of the same culture, and people of different cultures

Discussing ways in which the British, German, African, Latino, and Hispanic cultures have shaped this country in the past and present.

The suggestions I make here are only that -- suggestions. They are a collection of ideas that have emerged from my own teaching experience. They represent a starting point for the activities you will work out with your students.

Eentsy-Weentsy Spider / La pájara pinta (In Spanish, only the first word of a title is capitalized.)

My intention was to combine two songs with an animal theme from different cultures into one.

"Where is Spanish spoken?" "Can you show us where Latin America and Spain are?" "Does anyone speak Spanish in the USA?"

"Can you think of other animal songs?"

"Do you know more than one version of Eentsy Weentsy Spider?" (This is a good exercise in discussing with the students what folk songs are, that they are often learned and passed along "by ear," and the fact that the version we know is probably only one of several.)

When teaching your students La pájara pinta, encourage the use of harmonies, and let the song accelerate more and more toward the end.

They enjoy that!

"What languages are used in this song?" "Where do people speak English?" (Aside from the obvious - USA, Canada, Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand - don't forget to mention that English is spoken in some parts of India and Africa, and in many places in the Caribbean. Have I forgotten any?)

Der Mond ist aufgegangen

This is a sweet and profound song which my mother often sang to me. Here my mother, my daughter, and I sing it together.

Read the translation of the lyrics to your students and help them understand in their own terms what they mean, or in how many ways they can be interpreted. Encourage them to talk about what's important in life (for example -as described in the song- observing the beauty of nature, not laughing at people for who they are or what they do, and thinking about the ill and others who are less fortunate than we are.)

"What instrument is played in this song?"

"Do you like to sing with your family members?" "How does this song make you feel?"

"Do you know in what language this song was written?" "Can you say any words in German?" "Do you know where people speak German?" (In Germany, Switzerland, and Austria; in some communities in the United States, such as in the Amish or Hutterite communities, and in Amana, Iowa [the people from Amana are NOT Amish]; and in many private homes of people not living in German-speaking countries.) "Can you show us some of those countries on the map?"

Chontaduro maduro

This is a song of Afro-Pacific origin. It is easy to learn and it allows for experimentation with percussion (hands & instruments).

"Can you show us where Colombia is?"

"How is this song different from the previous one?" "How does it make you feel?"

"In the culture where this song comes from, people of all ages love to dance. Do you think we should stand up and try to find the rhythm with our bodies?"

"The song talks about a boy who has to work. Did you know that many poor children in the world have to work very hard? Do you help out at home? Do you work? "

Mi tripón

Read the translation of the lyrics to the children. Ask them to think of lullabies they know and encourage them to sing them.

“Can you show us where Venezuela is?”

“Can you identify the instrument?”

“Is this a fast or a slow song? Why?” “Why do you think adults sing lullabies to children?”

“Would you like it if someone sang a lullaby for you in Spanish when you go to sleep?” “Why?” “Why not?”

Hush, Little Baby

Allow your class to listen to this and the previous song in sequence. Compare them.

“Can you show us where the United States of America are on the map?” “Where is England?”

“Can you imagine how it was when your mother and father (or other guardian) were little? Do you think their parents sang to them?”

Rain Songs

The portion in Spanish is easy to learn, and students should be encouraged to add their own instruments/sounds/effects, including their own vocal renditions of “thunder” and “rain.” This can be fun if the entire class participates.

“Do you like the rain?” “Is rain good or bad?” “Are you scared of thunder?” “What do you do when you hear thunder and you are scared?” “Do you think animals are scared of thunder?” “Do you think singing songs about rain and thunder can make us less scared, and perhaps even make us feel cozy when we are in our homes and it is storming outside?”

Pescador, lucero y río

I suggest reading the translation of the song to the children, and then talking about love and jealousy. As always, it is worth thinking about parallels in the local culture: are there songs in English that tell a legend?

“Can you identify any of the instruments that are being played?” (They will probably only be able to identify the accordion. The other is a *tiple*, a 12-string guitar from Colombia.)

“Can you tell how many people are singing this song?” (There are two voice tracks singing in unison.)

“Do you know in what language this song is written?” “Can you say any words in Spanish?”

Tross tross trill

The main point here is to simply listen to the rhythm of the language. Encourage them to think of poems that have a distinct rhythm when recited.

William Tell Theme

When discussing this piece, play them the original classical version of Rossini’s William Tell Overture and tell them about Rossini

“Can you guess on what instrument this song was played?” “Can you also make music by tapping your hands on your cheeks?” “How can you make higher and lower notes playing your cheeks?” (By altering the opening of the mouth.)

“Can you make a galloping sound with your tongue?” “Can you make other interesting sounds with your mouth?” “Can you make animal sounds?”

El burrito sabanero

This type of music, played on a folk harp, maracas, and a small, four-stringed guitar called *cuatro*, is typical of the region known as *Llanos*, the savannas between Colombia and Venezuela. This is primarily a cattle-ranching region with its *vaquero* or cowboy culture.

The traditional *vaqueros* ride their horses barefoot. This is quite different from the USA, where cowboys usually wear tall boots! Talk about different customs for carrying out similar activities in various cultures. Perhaps you can find something about the *Llanos* in a library and tell them about the region.

The main activity with this song is to find the rhythm, and to dance to it, sing to it, and clap to it.

Since this is an instrumental piece, you can encourage children to make up a story that goes along with the title, and then act out the story to the music, using mime. The title means “Little Donkey From the Savanna,” and the title itself could suggest a theme for the story.

Es führt über den Main

Let the children listen to this song and then discuss their reaction to the music. Read the translation to them. I have had some success teaching children the first verse only, then arranging the whole piece for a performance in the following way: 1) Students sing the first verse to a simple instrumental accompaniment; 2) A second verse is played on instruments only, with the teacher or a student playing the melody as a soloist; 3) The choir finishes the song by repeating the first verse.

“What do you think about a bridge that makes people dance?” “Do you think such a bridge exists?” “Are there experiences or feelings that make you want to dance?”

“Can you tell what instruments are used in this song?” “Can you tell who is singing?” (An adult and a child - a mother and her daughter.)

Fuzzy Wuzzy

“Can you recite Fuzzy Wuzzy?” “Can you say it fast?” “Can you think of other silly poems?”

Debajo'un botón

Read the translation to them before they listen to this poem. Use this hand-clapping game as a starting point for composing a percussion piece for body percussion only. Use techniques such as clapping hands, patting cheeks while keeping the mouth slightly open, patting knees, swishing open hands together, snapping fingers, making tongue and lip sounds, and so forth. Divide the class into groups. Establish a basic, simple, slow, low-pitched beat which one group gets to play (pounding or stomping on the floor, for example). Have the other groups come in, one by one, adding their own rhythms, which should use different body percussion than the first group's. Experiment with tempo and dynamics. Children tend to get louder and louder when they play percussion, and the goal of this exercise should be to control that tendency. Talk about how the different groups should listen to each other so the rhythm doesn't get lost. And, of course, ask them to think of clapping games they know. They could even learn this poem in Spanish and perform it for their schoolmates at an appropriate occasion (an assembly? A concert?).

Una rata vieja / A la escuela

Here are two songs that I combined into one, although I did so for no particular reason. Perhaps the children can think of two or more songs that would be fun to combine into a musical potpourri.

Read the translations to them. Students could probably learn the A la escuela portion of the song in Spanish.

“Do you ever pretend to be ill so that you don't have to go to school?” “Can your parents tell that you are faking?” “What makes you not want to come to school?” “Do you usually like school?” “Do you always like school?” “What is fun about school? What is not so much fun?”

Friendly Spiders and Snakes

“Can you imagine friendly spiders plucking their webs to play this tune?” “Are there instruments that people can pluck to make music?” “Can you hear the friendly rattlesnakes playing percussion?” “What instrument are they playing?” (The maracas.) “What other animals do you think are playing percussion instruments?” (Any animals they can think of.) “Which instruments are *they* playing?” (Drums.)

“Are you afraid of any animals?” “Can you think of anything good that your least favorite animals do?” “Does talking about your least favorite animals help you become less afraid of them?”

Camaraca

My two oldest daughters made up this song at night, while talking to each other in bed prior to going to sleep. A friend and I later created an arrangement for it. The lyrics mean nothing, but it always makes my daughters laugh when they sing this song.

Encourage your students to think of nonsensical phrases that sound interesting or funny, and to make up melodies for them. Try to compose a class song this way.

My Three Little Girls

I wrote this song for my girls because I love them very much. I always tell my students that, and then we talk about love in general, and the fact that many songs are about love.

Read the lyrics to them and make sure they understand what it all means.

“Do you take a blanket or a special friend with you to bed at night?”

“Do you have brothers or sisters?” “Do you play together?” “Do you ever fight?”

“What are some of the dangerous things in this world?” “Do your parents talk to you about them?” “Do you also hope that the people you love are never harmed?”

Twinkle, Little Star

Besides wanting to include this familiar tune simply for its own sake, I also intended it to be a listening exercise.

“Do you think it is nighttime or daytime when the girl sings this song?” “Is it winter or summer when the girl sings this song?” “How can you tell?”

(Stars are only visible at night, so she probably sang it at night while looking at the stars. It is probably summer, because crickets don’t chirp in winter.)

Abendstille überall

Read the translation to them. Teach them this round or a round in English, if they are old enough to stick to their own melody and not be distracted by the others.

“Do you like nighttime?” “What sounds do we hear in the night?”

Three Little Fishies

This is a portion of a tune that was popular in the 40’s. Encourage your students to learn the different parts and perform this song, using only voice and body percussion.

Have them fill in more rhythm patterns (syncopations) while they listen to the tape. I specifically left the base rhythm (finger snapping) very simple for this purpose.

De las montañas venimos

This is a Christmas song from Puerto Rico. Many traditional Christmas songs from Latin America are very upbeat and often talk about Joseph, Mary, and the Christ Child as if people knew them personally, and as if they were part of their own village.

Read the translation to them. Talk about the differences in rhythm patterns between the straightforward beat of Three Little Fishies or any of the other songs with a simple rhythm, and this particular song. Like Chontaduro maduro, this song has rhythmic roots inherited from Africa. Help your students identify the different instruments (drums, maracas, claves) and find the various rhythmic patterns.

Mention that one of the important aspects we inherited from African musical traditions is complex rhythm: many different percussion instruments playing different rhythm patterns at once to the same beat. Draw comparisons between Latin American music with African roots and North American music with African roots.

A simple way to teach children this song is to let them learn the chorus in Spanish, and then have them sing the verses in “la-las” or “pa-pas,” with a strong staccato effect. They get a kick out of that.

That’s All, Folks!

This is on the tape just for fun.

“Can you speak duck talk?”

TRANSLATIONS

NOTE: ALL LYRICS CAN BE FOUND AT WWW.CALLESUR.COM UNDER "RECORDINGS."

LA PAJARA PINTA

THE COLORED BIRD SAT ON A LEMON TREE. WITH ITS BEAK IT CUT THE LEAF, WITH THE LEAF IT CUT THE FLOWER. OH, WHERE MIGHT MY BELOVED BE?

DER MOND IST AUFGEANGEN

THE MOON HAS RISEN, AND THE GOLDEN STARS SHINE BRIGHTLY AND CLEARLY ON THE SKY.
THE FOREST STANDS BLACK AND SILENT,
AND FROM THE MEADOWS THE WHITE FOG RISES
SO WONDERFULLY.

DO YOU SEE THE MOON STANDING THERE?
ONLY HALF OF IT IS VISIBLE, YET IT IS ROUND AND BEAUTIFUL.
SO IT IS WITH MANY THINGS: WE LAUGH ABOUT THEM,
BECAUSE OUR EYES ONLY SEE THEM PARTIALLY.

PROUD HUMANS THAT WE ARE, WE ARE POOR, VAIN SINNERS WHO KNOW NOT MUCH.
WE MAKE WEAVINGS OF AIR AND SEEK MANY ARTS,
BUT DISTANCE OURSELVES MORE AND MORE
FROM OUR GOALS.

SO THEN, BROTHERS, LIE DOWN IN GOD'S NAME,
FOR THE NIGHT BREEZE IS COLD.
PROTECT US, LORD, FROM PUNISHMENT,*
AND LET US AND OUR ILL NEIGHBOR SLEEP IN PEACE

*THIS IS A VERY OLD FOLK SONG. IT WAS WRITTEN NEARLY 200 YEARS AGO WHEN NO ONE WAS THINKING ABOUT SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE. IF IT MAKES YOU MORE COMFORTABLE, SIMPLY OMIT THE WORD "LORD" AND READ: MAY WE BE PROTECTED FROM PUNISHMENT...

CHONTADURO MADURO

LITTLE BOY ARTURO IS SELLING RIPE CHONTADURO FRUITS. THEY BUY CHONTADURO WITH SALT, BUT NO ONE GIVES ME ANY.

MI TRIPON

SLEEP, MY LITTLE ONE, AND LET'S FOOL THE OWL AND FOOL THE COCO*, WHICH DOESN'T SCARE ANYONE ANY MORE.
TOMORROW THE SUN SHALL SHINE IN YOUR CRIB ,
AND IT WILL TELL YOU ALL ABOUT HOW IT LOST THE MOON ONE DAY, SLEEP MY LITTLE ONE.

SLEEP, MY LITTLE ONE, FOR THE TIRED AFTERNOON HAS LEFT ALREADY, AND THE QUIET, FRESH NIGHT HAS COME.
DAWN'S LIGHT WILL OPEN YOUR EYES AND SHOW YOU RIVERS AND ROADS, AND ALSO THE MOUNTAIN,
SLEEP MY LITTLE ONE

*THE COCO IS SOMETHING LIKE THE "BOOGEYMAN."

QUE LLUEVA

LET IT RAIN, LET IT RAIN, THE VIRGIN OF THE CAVE. LITTLE BIRDS ARE SINGING, CLOUDS ARE RISING. YES! NO! LET THE DOWNPOUR FALL!

PESCADOR, LUCERO Y RIO

A COLOMBIAN LEGEND: "THEY SAY THAT THERE WAS ONCE A FISHERMAN WHO USED TO GO FISHING AT NIGHT. ONE NIGHT, HE CAUGHT A STAR IN HIS NET, TOOK IT BACK TO HIS VILLAGE, AND LIT UP THE VILLAGE WITH ITS LIGHT. AFTER THAT NIGHT, HE NEVER RETURNED TO THE RIVER. THEY SAY THAT SUDDENLY THE VILLAGE BECAME DARK AGAIN: IN ITS JEALOUSY, THE RIVER HAD RISEN, TAKEN THE LIFE OF THE FISHERMAN, AND STOLEN BACK THE STAR.

TROSS TROSS TRILL

TROSS TROSS TRILL, THE FARMER HAS A COLT. THE COLT WILL NOT WALK, THE FARMER WANTS TO SELL IT. THE FARMER WANTS TO SELL IT, LIFE IS GETTING HARDER. LIFE IS GETTING HARDER...THE WINTERS ARE QUITE COLD. QUITE COLD ARE THE WINTERS, THE CHILDREN FEEL IT, TOO. THEY GO INTO THE KITCHEN AND EAT THEIR WARM, WARM SOUP.

ES FÜHRT ÜBER DEN MAIN

OVER THE RIVER MAIN THERE GOES A BRIDGE, AND WHOEVER WANTS TO WALK OVER IT, MUST DANCE.

IA COACHER COMES ALONG WITH A HEAVY LOAD, AND HIS THREE HORSES DANCE PAST.

A LITTLE GIRL COMES TO THE BRIDGE ALONE.
SHE LIFTS HER SKIRT AND DANCES AS THE WIND.

ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE LAND COME RUNNING:
"OH, DO STEP OFF, FOR *WE'D* LIKE TO DANCE !"

OVER THE RIVER MAIN THERE IS A BRIDGE.
WE HOLD HANDS AND DANCE FOREVER MORE.

DEBAJO'UN BOTON

UNDER ONE OF MR. MARTÍN'S BUTTONS THERE WAS A LITTLE MOUSE. OH, HOW SMALL THAT MOUSE MUST HAVE BEEN TO FIT UNDER MR. MARTÍN'S BUTTON!"

UNA RATA VIEJA / A LA ESCUELA

AN OLD RAT, WHO WAS AN IRONING LADY, IRONED HER TAIL ONE DAY WHILE SHE WAS IRONING HER OWN CLOTHES. SHE PUT ON CREAM AND TIED A BANDAGE AROUND IT, AND THE POOR RAT HAD ONLY A LITTLE TAIL LEFT!

"LITTLE MAYA, LITTLE MAYA, IT IS TIME FOR SCHOOL."

"MOMMY, MOMMY, MY TOOTH HURTS."

"LITTLE MAYA, LITTLE MAYA, YOU ARE BEING LAZY!"

CAMARACA

THIS IS A SONG MY DAUGHTERS MADE UP IN THEIR GAMES, AND THE LYRICS DON'T MEAN ANYTHING, EXCEPT TO THEM.

AYMAPACHE CAMARARACACA MARACA
AYMAPACHE CAMARACA!

ABENDSTILLE ÜBERALL

THE SILENCE OF THE NIGHT IS EVERYWHERE. ONLY DOWN BY THE CREEK, THE NIGHTINGALE SINGS ITS MOURNFUL CALL QUIETLY THROUGH THE VALLEY.

DE LAS MONTAÑAS VENIMOS

WE COME FROM THE MOUNTAINS TO INVITE YOU TO EAT A ROASTED PIG ON ITS SPIT, AND A GOOD DRINK, TOO!

OH, DEAR MARY AND DEAR JOSEPH, DO OPEN THE DOOR, I WANT TO SEE YOU!

OH, PLEASE OPEN, FOR IT IS ALMOST THREE O'CLOCK AND I HAVEN'T HAD MY COFFEE YET!

I SHALL NOT CELEBRATE THESE HOLIDAYS WITHOUT MILK RICE AND PASTRY. DON'T BRING ME ANYTHING I DON'T LIKE: FOR THESE HOLIDAYS, BRING ME A ROASTED PIG!

OH, I DO KNOW ONE THING THAT WE WILL CERTAINLY BRING YOU: THE BEAUTIFUL FLOWER OF THIS GARDEN ISLAND!

(PUERTO RICANS OFTEN REFER TO THEIR BEAUTIFUL ISLAND AS A GARDEN.)