

Dear Educator, Parent, or Caretaker:

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

Please mention to your class that Maya, Marta, and Emma (my daughters), the three lead singers on this album, are school-aged girls who speak English, German, and Spanish, and that many children around the world grow up speaking several languages at once. Encourage them to think of it not as something amazing, strange, or unusual, but as something "normal" (for many people) and positive that can be achieved by anyone who really wishes to learn other languages. 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.

Lead sheets are available for several of the songs on this album on the Latin America Music And Culture Kit, a multi-disciplinary teaching resource for music teachers, band teachers, choir teachers, art teachers, language teachers, and social science teachers, developed with partial funding from the Iowa Arts Council in 2004. The Culture Kit may be previewed and ordered through the following web site: <http://www.laticulturekit.com>. Lead sheets not included in the Culture Kit can be requested for a fee of \$15 from Artes Latinas at music@la-tc.com.

I am also happy to answer questions and assist you with the pronunciation of the songs. Please e-mail me at music@la-tc.com, and if you wish, provide a telephone number where you can be reached.

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, and Hispanic cultures have shaped this country in the past and present.
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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.

Enjoy!



Karin Stein ("La Negra Karin"
Producer of "Porompompóm")

NOTE: Discussion and activity ideas are still being developed for some songs, which are on the album but are missing on this sheet. Please request any missing ones that interest you at music@la-tc.com

POROMPOMPOM

SONG LYRICS, TRANSLATIONS, AND DISCUSSION IDEAS

María Isabel

Latin Americans love warm weather, the beach, they love music, they love romanticism and serenading! "What outside activity makes you happy?" "Have you been to the ocean? A lake?" "Do you like to play music for others?"

Elephant Songs

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

"What languages are used in this song?" "Where is Spanish spoken?" "Can you show us where Latin America and Spain are?" "Does anyone speak Spanish in the USA?" "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?) "Can you think of other animal songs?"

The Four Friends

This poem is a classic in children's literature.

"Do you know any poems that you could recite?" "Is the author telling a serious story about animals? Is he being silly?"

"What sounds do snails make?" "Do you understand all the words?" "Which expressions or words in this poem might the author have made up?" "Can you clap a beat to this poem?"

Nun Will Der Lenz Uns Grüßen

This is a joyful song which my mother often sang to me. Here my mother, my daughters, 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. Talk about the seasons, especially spring, and how spring affects living things.

"What is your favorite season and why?" "How do you feel when spring arrives and the flowers start to bloom?" "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?"

Tinku

This is a traditional panpipe piece from Bolivia. Instruments used: panpipes, bombo drum, charango (small string instrument), chaj'cha rattles (goat hooves sewed onto a ribbon). This type of music is native to the Andes mountains. Instructions on how make panpipes and play this piece are detailed in the Latin America Music And Culture Kit (www.laticulturekit.com).

"Can you clap the rhythm the bombo drum plays?" Can you tell which instruments are added with each round of the music?"

Oh, Be Kind To Your Web-Footed Friends

This is one of many similar lyrics set to John Phillip Souza's famous "Stars And Stripes Forever" march for bands. I suggest you find Souza's original version and play it for your students.

"Have you heard this tune before?" "Did you know it was written for a military band?" "Can you think of other silly songs?"

Hejo / Hey-Ho

A "shocking" is a bundle of grain on its stalk tied together, standing upright in the field to dry. It's an old-fashioned way of gathering and drying grain, still used by pioneers in this country, and still used in some areas of the world where grains are harvested manually.

Similar melodies are often shared across country borders and language groups, sometimes even across continents.

"What do you call this kind of song?" (Canon or Round) "What are the lyrics of the German version about?" (Agriculture, weather, the harvest, using horses and wagons) "Why do you think the lyrics in English are different?"

ABC

This is on the CD just for fun, but it is a good vehicle to look at the alphabets of other languages.

"Can you speak duck talk?" "Can you recite song lyrics or a poem using a funny voice, or really fast, or really slow, or leaving certain words out. Playing with language is fun!" "Do all languages use the same alphabet?" How many languages are there in the world?" "Can you recognize and pronounce the letters used in the Greek, Russian, Arabic, Hebrew, Chinese, Malay and Japanese alphabets?" (Just to name a few examples.) "Where are the countries that use those alphabets?"

La Acamaya

This is a call-and-response song, found in many musical traditions. This one comes from Veracruz, on the Gulf of Mexico. The word "acamaya" for "crab" is a very regional word, not used in most of the rest of Latin America. In standard Spanish, "crab" is "cangrejo.."

"Do you know any songs in which one person sings a line, and the choir answers?"

Alarrurru Niño

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

Marta's Winter Song

Encourage your students to make up a song of any kind. Pick a simple song, like 'Twinkle Little Star,' and change it. Change the tempo, the melody, the rhythm, allow them to improvise with random vocal sounds.

El Alegre Pescador

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 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 man in this song is poor, yet he is content. What can we learn from him?"

Sambalélê

This playful children's tune, as is often the case with nursery songs, poems, and games, contains a collection of nonsensical phrases and verses, not unlike "Pop Goes the Wiesel."

"Can you find Brazil on a map?" "Did you know that most people in Latin America speak Spanish, but people in Brazil speak Portuguese?" "Did you know that the Spanish language was brought to Latin America by the people from Spain, and the Portuguese language was brought by the people of Portugal?" "Can you find Spain and Portugal on a map?" "How did people from Spain and Portugal come to the Americas when they first arrived?" "What did they want here?" "What did they do to the Indians?" "Do you think children all over the world like to sing and play?" "Should you ever have gotten a good scolding or spanking for something you did?" "What do you think Sambalélê did to deserve it?" (His head is injured - he probably wasn't very careful, etc.)

Our Animals

In this piece I experiment with mouth percussion, tongue clicking, and hand percussion to create a Caribbean rhythm on which I have superimposed the sounds of domestic animals, and the sounds of people from Iowa and Latin America calling their pets and farm animals. "Do you have pets or farm animals?"

"Why would people invent special, high-pitched sounds to call their farm animals?" "How do you call your pets?" "Can you tell apart the different rhythm patterns made in this song?" (There are 3)

Madame Ophélie

A traditional piece from Trinidad, sung in Patois French, which is one of the variants of standard French spoken in Latin America. Over 400 languages are spoken in Latin America, although the majority of people speak either Spanish or Portuguese. The remainder are Native American languages, French, English, and Dutch.

Scintillate

This parody of "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" is perfect for discussing the use of language in various styles and across time periods. Analyze individual words and sentence structures to help students understand unfamiliar language. This tune also allows for student recognition of major and minor keys. "Can you understand this version of Twinkle Little Star?" "Can you change the words to another song without changing the meaning?" "Can you pick a word and think of other words that mean the same thing?"

Ojos Azules

This is a traditional melody from Bolivia, which I arranged for voices and panpipes. Instructions and lead sheets for performing this tune on panpipes as well can also be found on the Latin America Music And Culture Kit. Engaging children (9 and older) in playing panpipes is a very valuable and fun activity. It teaches cooperation and team effort in a new way.

"How does this panpipe tune differ from 'Tinku?' " (More vocals, different tempo, mellower mood, use of harmony, different rhythm) "Did you know that this tune only uses five notes? It is called a pentatonic tune. Some folk songs in English also only use five notes, such as 'The Farmer in The Dell,' and 'Swing Low, Sweet Chariot.' "

La Partida

This is a traditional Paraguayan piece, played on the Paraguayan harp, accompanied on the guitar. Before Europeans arrived in the Americas, Native Americans used a large variety of percussion and wind instruments, including panpipes. With the arrival of the Europeans arrived the string instruments. Today, harps are widely used in Paraguay (national instrument), Venezuela, eastern Colombia, the Peruvian highlands, and eastern Mexico (Veracruz). Encourage the children to comment about the piece, and to listen to instruments and songs from other countries.

Tres Pescaditos

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.

El Burrito Sabanero

This is a Christmas song from Venezuela. 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. This song is accompanied by a small, four-stringed guitar called *cuatro*, and maracas. Find the rhythm, and to dance to it, sing to it, and clap to it.