

Global Music Lesson Plans

Lesson 3: Singing Games – UK and Botswana (Age range 7-11)

Time required:

One 50 minute lesson.

Activity:

Performing and comparing two children's singing games: 'Melon Game' from Botswana and 'Good to See You' from the UK.

Aims:

- To introduce a range of singing games.
- To explore the common musical and other characteristics that characterise, and contribute to the success of, singing games.

Pupils will learn:

- To identify and respond to changes of meter.
- To coordinate singing and movement in singing games.
- That children from many different cultures enjoy performing and devising singing games.

Web links you will need:

- [Image of a children's singing game](http://ijea.asu.edu/v3n7/fig2.jpg). <http://ijea.asu.edu/v3n7/fig2.jpg>
- Audio files of '[Good to See You](#)' and '[Melon Game](#)'.

Other resources you will need:

'Good to See You' and 'Melon Game' Activity Sheets (below).

Useful Information
Singing games are a feature of almost every culture across the globe, and are a musical tradition that is understood universally. They share common musical characteristics e.g. they are songs that are often made more rhythmically or melodically intricate by the children who perform them and they often include actions (the coordination of which are usually challenging).

Lesson plan	Singing Games – UK and Botswana (age range 7-11)
Starter	<p>Display the image of a children’s singing game from Ghana (above). Ask the pupils what they can see and what they think is going on in the picture. Point out that the children are playing a singing game that features clapping. Can they think of any games that they play that involve singing with actions?</p>
Main	<p>Performing two children’s singing games Point out that singing games are performed and enjoyed by children from every region of the world. Explain that the class is going to perform and compare two singing game songs. The first is ‘Good to See You’ (above) from the UK and the second is ‘Melon Game’ (above) from Botswana. Teach each song by following the instructions on the Activity Sheets provided below.</p> <p>Making comparisons Discuss with the class what the two songs had in common (e.g. the use of both singing and clapping, coordination challenges, complex rhythms). How were the two songs and games similar and different? Do the class think that children from Botswana would enjoy singing ‘Good to See You?’ Why?</p>
Plenary	<p>To help pupils understand the way in which children’s singing games evolve, set the pupils a five minute challenge i.e. in pairs, to perform ‘Good to See You’ but adding their own body sound actions/accompaniment e.g. using claps, finger clicks, slaps on knees, alternating hands etc.</p>

Worksheet: 'Good to see you!'

Good to see you!

Traditional singing game

Good to see you here in Cam - bridge - shire,

3
good to see you here in Cam - bridge - shire,

5
good to see you, good to see you,

7
good to see you here in Cam - bridge - shire.

Teaching sequence

1. Teach 'Good to See You' (above) replacing 'Cam-bridge-shire' for an appropriate town, city, county or country.
2. March on the spot whilst singing the song.
3. Ask pupils to count the total number of beats that make up the song. To do this, ask them to work in pairs so that one sings and marches whilst the other counts how many beats there are in the whole song (Answer = 25 beats).
4. Point out that most pieces of music are either in 3 or 4 time so that the number of beats in the piece are divisible by either 3 or 4. Why do they think that this piece is not divisible by 3 or 4? (Answer = because the song mixes 3 and 4 time creating unusual rhythmic stresses – a convention of many children's singing games).
5. To make this explicit, each time pupils sing the word 'good' or the syllable 'Cam' from 'Cam-bridge-shire' ask them to take a small step forward (returning to marching on the spot with the next syllable).

Extension

6. Ask pairs of pupils to perform 'Good to See You', adding their own sequence of body sound actions as an accompaniment e.g. using claps, finger clicks, slaps on knees, alternating hands etc.

Worksheet: 'Melon Game'

Melon game
Traditional singing game from Botswana

The image shows musical notation for the 'Melon Game'. It consists of two staves. The top staff is labeled 'Clapping rhythm' and is in 3/4 time, showing a repeating pattern of eighth notes. The bottom staff is labeled 'Voices' and is also in 3/4 time. The lyrics are: 'Mar - ni turn a - round pass it to me.' Below the lyrics are four boxes describing actions: 'Everyone stands in a circle and sings the name of the child with the ball' (under 'Mar - ni'), 'Child with ball turns around' (under 'turn'), '.... and throws to another' (under 'pass'), and 'Chosen child catches the ball and steps into the circle' (under 'me.').

Teaching notes

This is a traditional catching game from Botswana that is played using a melon (note: the words of the song have been adapted). The game is accompanied by a simple song that, with each repetition, incorporates the name of each new 'catcher'. The sequence of actions is described above. Importantly, the song is accompanied by a clapped rhythm that is performed by the participants as they play. Even more complex is the fact that, when performed by children from Botswana, the rhythm is split between different groups of performers. When performed together, the rhythms interlock to form the repeating rhythmic pattern notated above. A simplified grid version of the interlocking rhythms is as follows:

Clapping Rhythms

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Part 1		*			*		*		*		
Part 2			*		*		*			*	