

## **Vamos a Cantar y Jugar!**

### **Bringing Songs and Games into Your Classroom with Authenticity and Engagement**

- **Why** bring songs and games from cultures different from our own into the music classroom?

From Patricia Shehan Campbell: “Through music that is initially culturally unfamiliar to their students, music educators can support their journey down a learning pathway to the attainment of musical knowledge and skills and development of intercultural understanding. This musical journey leads students to becoming more human, more compassionate, and more sensitive to one another’s feelings.”

From National Board for Professional Teaching Standards: “In interpreting and evaluating materials, [accomplished] teachers help students become aware of the ways in which music that is new to them might be similar to or different from music with which they are already familiar. They work to broaden students’ aesthetic understanding of various types and styles of music, demonstrating how music that is harmonious to a particular group may be discordant to another.”

- **What** makes this difficult to do?

Have you as a teacher attended training that included songs in languages other than English? Did you intend to use a song and then not do it? What held you back?

- **How** can we do this authentically?

We will have to leave our comfort zone, but we’re used to that, aren’t we? As teachers we are continually evolving, learning, and growing into the teacher we want to be.

Tips for taking that step:

1. Consider the source. Look for a culture bearer, whether this is a person you can speak to or someone in a video. Reach out to a culture bearer. Debanhi and I are here to assist you! Use YouTube for more authentic versions of a song or dance or recording.
2. Practice the song many times. Consider your pronunciation. In Spanish the vowels are always pronounced one way only. Accents go on the next-to-last syllable unless marked with an accent on a different syllable. Ask students in your school to help you with pronunciation.
3. Take a song back to your classroom as soon as possible after you learn it in a conference session or professional development. The sooner you try something, the fresher it is and easier to recall how it was presented and why you liked it.

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SongWorks Conference  
Boston, March 2023

“This musical journey leads students to becoming more human, more compassionate, and more sensitive to one another’s feelings.” – Patricia Shehan Campbell

### Pajarito Cantas Tu



**Translation:** Little bird you sing, you sing, you sing, you sing. Little bird you sing, you sing for me.

**Instructions:** This is an action song. Various verbs can replace the word *cantas* and the children perform the actions. Examples: *Vuelas*: Flies; *Saltas*: Jumps; *Bailas*: Dances; *Vuelta*: Spins; *Duermes*: Sleeps

**Source:** Rhona Brink, who collected it from a student in Bailey Elementary in 1984.

### References

Campbell, P. (2023). Intercultural understanding through world music pedagogy. *Teaching Music*, 30 (3), 40-43.

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, Music. (2001). Retrieved from <https://www.nbpts.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/ECYA-MUSIC.pdf>