

SONG AND DANCE IN *ASTURIAS*

CURRICULUM

CLASS NOTES®

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INTRODUCTION

The following lessons and activities are designed to support awareness and build competency of several foundational music skills and concepts in the Class Notes Video Song and Dance in *Asturias*. Built around the core concepts of Create, Perform, Respond and Connect, the suggested order of lessons aims to establish comprehension of key terms and sequentially build on the concepts presented. Use them in this order or feel free to mix and match according to your needs.

The following lessons and activities were created around the following ideas:

- ABA patterns
- Classroom Composition
- Creative response to music listening and emotional connection to music listening

Activities were created with a range of grade and skill levels in mind. Again, adjust and modify to meet the unique needs of your classroom.

Finally, get in touch with your thoughts, feedback, ideas or requests for modifications or additional resources.

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LESSON/ACTIVITIES

CREATE and PERFORM ABA compositions

Remind students that music has a steady beat, or pulse, and the speed of that pulse is called *tempo*.

- Explain or review the idea that music is full of patterns. Many songs and instrumental pieces follow a pattern of “same-different-same.” We hear one thing, then something different, then the first thing again. Musicians show this pattern by writing “ABA.”

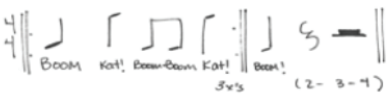
Create some ABA compositions with your students. You don’t need to notate music; just use a grid to help organize ideas. Reinforce different sections with color changes. See the PRINT PAGES section at the end of this curriculum for a sample ABA template.

Directions on the grid can range from very specific to open-ended. Below are a few examples.

First, here is a very general example that simply suggests a sound source for each section. Performers determine how long each section lasts, as well as specific rhythms, patterns or sounds within each section. Make more specific by adding text, such as the directive “ten shakes” underneath the maracas.

A	B	A
Shake along with the word pattern: WALK, WALK, RUN-RUN, WALK Repeat three times 	TEN STEADY TAPS, STARTING QUIET AND GETTING LOUDER (CRESCENDO) 	Shake along with the word pattern: WALK, WALK, RUN-RUN, WALK Repeat three times 

Here is an example that integrates singing with rhythmic notation. Play the rhythm using patsch/clap, stamp/clap or any classroom percussion instrument.

A	B	A
Insert a favorite classroom song!		Repeat the favorite classroom song!

Here is a final example that uses imagery to suggest sounds. Prompts like these provide a bit of structure and guidance to help encourage creativity and facilitate vocal exploration and improvisation. Ask students to vocalize in response to imagery, or use classroom instruments to improvise sounds.

Adapt these ABA compositions to tell a story of some sort, or to enhance and extend a familiar classroom song. Be sure to encourage students to title their compositions. Below is an example using “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star” and space imagery to create an ABA composition called “Twinkle Space Explosion.”

Students who might consider themselves too old to sing “Twinkle” can be encouraged to dig into the space explosions. Offer the alternative to play “Twinkle” on a classroom instrument instead of singing. Explain that the composer Camille Saint-Saëns put “Twinkle” in the middle of one of his compositions—“Fossils” from *Carnival of the Animals*. Listen to that track by scrolling down to the bottom of the [Song and Dance in Asturias Lesson Plan Audio](#) playlist.

A	B	A
	<i>Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star, How I wonder what you are! Up above the world so high, Like a diamond in the sky. Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star, How I wonder what you are!</i>	

Practice and perform your ABA compositions in the classroom.

LEARNING CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can improvise musical sounds in response to teacher cues.
- ☐ I can generate rhythmic or melodic patterns.
- ☐ I can arrange musical sounds in an ABA pattern/form.
- ☐ I can perform music using an established musical form.

KEY WORDS

ABA, composition, form, pattern

RESPOND to artistic works through active listening

Tell students that you will be ABA detectives, listening to several pieces of music in order to discover exactly when the B section happens, and when the second A section returns.

Supply students with listening cards. They can create their own, or use the templates provided in the PRINT PAGES section at the end of this curriculum.

Listen to a selection from the ABA Pieces section of the [Song and Dance in Asturias Lesson Plan Audio](#) playlist. Ask students to flash the appropriate card when they hear a section change. If you would prefer that students not be influenced by seeing others' responses, ask them to point to the card instead of flashing it. Alternately, ask for an ABA expert to try the exercise in front of the class.

To extend the activity, listen again. This time, use an ABA listening grid (use the same blank ABA template referenced in the composition activity at the beginning of this curriculum). Ask students to write descriptors in each section as they listen. As an alternative for younger students, draw contrasting pictures in each section as they listen. Feel free to announce each section as you listen to reinforce student comprehension.

Below are sample completed grids for each selection on the [Song and Dance in Asturias Lesson Plan Audio](#) playlist. Feel free to use these selections or curate your own.

Notes for all three selections, and listening to ABA pieces in general:

- Students will always be eager to get to the B section, and there might be some false starts. Sometimes you will need to listen all the way through to understand that the B section begins with the biggest contrasts. Point out to students that each section might have sub-sections.
- There might not be universal agreement about exactly when a section begins or ends (see the notes below on the Ravel piece). Thoughtfully citing evidence to defend an answer indicates purposeful listening, and the process is more important than the product.

Impromptu Op. 142 (D. 395) No. 2 in A flat Major by Franz Schubert

A	B	A
Solid chords/blocked chords Graceful Bittersweet 0:00-3:10	Flowing Broken chords Moves up and down Dramatic 3:10-5:29	Solid chords/blocked chords Graceful Bittersweet 5:29-7:18

Notes: This is the longest piece. Each section is repeated and each section contains subsections. There is a significant shift at around 1:10, and on the first listen, many students might think it shifts to B. But if they keep listening, they will hear a bigger contrast at 3:10.

Three Preludes: No. 2 in C-sharp Minor—Andante con moto e poco rubato by George Gershwin

A	B	A
Pizzicato/plucked sounds Fast Energetic and exciting 0:00-1:40	Much slower Sad/mood shift 1:40-5:08***	Pizzicato/plucked sounds Fast Energetic and exciting ***5:08-6:13

Notes: The end of the B section/return of A is debatable. The pizzicato sound returns before 5:08, but the theme doesn't fully re-emerge until then. This makes for a good discussion point with students. Ask them to identify exactly where they think A returns, and ask them to use evidence (and music vocabulary) to defend their answer. This piece has very pronounced mood and tempo changes between A and B sections.

LEARNING CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can identify repeating patterns and expressive elements while listening to and interacting with a variety of music.

KEY WORDS patterns, ABA, pizzicato, tempo

CONNECT music listening with personal experiences, feelings and emotions

In the Class Notes Video Song and Dance in *Asturias*, children respond to what they hear in the music. Help students engage in personal reflection and classroom discussion.

Begin by watching the performance-only video (found in the Song and Dance in *Asturias* Lesson Plan Audio playlist) or listening to the audio track of the entire piece.

Pose the following questions for individual reflection or journaling. These are the questions that were posed to the children seen in the video.

- › What do you hear?
- › What does this music make you think of?
- › How does this music make you feel?
- › What do you think the composer was trying to communicate through this music?
- › What are the sounds of your home?

After students have reflected on these questions individually, pose the questions again and ask for volunteers willing to share their answers.

LEARNING CHECKLIST

- ☐ I can identify an emotion experienced when listening to music.
- ☐ I can share how specific musical selections relate to personal, social and emotional experiences.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Listen to more music by composer Isaac Albéniz by scrolling down to the MORE ALBÉNIZ section of the [Song and Dance in Asturias Lesson Plan Audio](#) playlist.
- HISTORICAL/BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION
 - › The Class Notes Video Song and Dance in *Asturias* is not designed to teach students about the composer Isaac Albéniz, but a handful of easy-to-understand, easy-to-remember details enhance the viewing experience. Here are a few quick facts about Isaac Albéniz:
 - › He lived from 1860-1909.
 - › He lived in Spain his entire life but traveled the world, performing on the piano on concert tours.
 - › He used Spanish folk songs in a lot of the music he composed.
 - › He was a child prodigy, which meant he was famous as a child.
 - › His son became a professional soccer player.

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PRINT PAGES

ABA TEMPLATE

A	B	A

