



# Smithsonian Folkways

## **Son Jarocho from Veracruz: Exploration of Music and Dance Forms A Smithsonian Folkways Lesson**

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**Suggested Grade Levels:** 3-5, 6-8, 9-12

**Country:** Mexico

**Region:** Veracruz

**Culture Group:**

Mexican **Genre:** Son

Jarocho

**Instruments:** Voice

**Language:** Spanish

**Co-Curricular Areas:** Spanish, Social Studies, Dance

**National Standards:** 1, 5, 6, 8, 9

**Musical Knowledge/Skills:** Listening to (instruments, beat, meter); Spanish words and lyrics; Song Structure/ Singing (partial lyrics and full melodies); Dancing

**General Knowledge/Skills:** Getting to know the culture of Mexico--its language, location, values; the migration of music, the importance of dance.

### **Materials from Folkways:**

- *La Bamba: Sones Jarochos from Veracruz* performed by José Gutiérrez & Los Hermanos Ochoa (SFW40505)—liner notes, English and Spanish lyrics <http://www.folkways.si.edu/jose-gutierrez-los-hermanos-ochoa/la-bamba-sones-jarochos-from-veracruz/latin-world/music/album/smithsonian>
- “El Zapateado” from *La Bamba: Sones Jarochos from Veracruz* performed by José Gutiérrez & Los Hermanos Ochoa (SFW40505) <http://www.folkways.si.edu/jose-gutierrez-los-hermanos-ochoa/la-bamba-sones-jarochos-from-veracruz/latin-world/music/album/smithsonian>
- “El Pájaro Cu” (The Coo Bird) from *La Bamba: Sones Jarochos* from

Veracruz performed by José Gutiérrez & Los Hermanos Ochoa (SFW40505) <http://www.folkways.si.edu/jose-gutierrez-los-hermanos-ochoa/la-bamba-sones-jarochos-from-veracruz/latin-world/music/album/smithsonian>

- Videos of “La Bamba” and “Balaju” <http://s.si.edu/mexico-videos>

**Instruments:** hands (clapping); voice; feet (dancing); *cajon* (wooden box)

**Other Materials:** map of Veracruz; Photos/videos of the culture, people, and location; photos of instruments or actual instruments; other videos found in library

### Experiences:

Watch videos of “La Bamba” and “Balaju” <http://s.si.edu/mexico-videos>

### “El Zapateado”

- Listen to recording
  - (a) Clap/Pat different patterns to 6/8 – (*sesquialtera*) Discuss meter/use rhythm sticks to tap out beats or dance steps
  - (b) Move side to side to the downbeats
    - ◆ Ask students if they hear what type of instruments are being used; explain instruments through pictures, video, or having the instruments present. Ask students what instruments are common in other music? What instruments are different? Is the dance used an instrument?
    - ◆ Explain short history of Veracruz and *son jarocho* music and history of the folk music tradition (See liner notes and Grove Music Online for information)
- Explain the *zapateado* and show video of dances – rapid movement of the dancer’s feet against the ground or a *tarima* (raised wooden platform) producing a percussive accompaniment normally performed during instrumental interludes so the singing is not drowned out. (See Grove Music Online)
- Explain type of dance (*jarabe*) – Example is the *Mexican Hat Dance* played in the video
- Departing from the popular well-known dance show another video of other dances of the *jarabe* and/or explore the history of the Mexican Hat Dance –
- Explain meaning of the word *jarabe* –refers to “sweet syrup:”

“Jarabe” is derived from the Arabic word “Xarab” which means mixture of herbs

- Trace the meaning of the word and song and figure out where it is today - Originating from Spain and developed in Mexico; *Son jarocho*s influenced by African slaves (e.g. *La Bamba*); moved into mariachi music/popular Latin music; It is now present in the U.S. in folk dance troupes – professionally, in schools, and in popular music (e.g. Los Lobos – Album: *Pistola y Corazon*);
- Find popular *son jarocho*s in popular music and in Mariachi music
- Hand out lyrics in Spanish and English; discuss the lyrics and meanings; dissect 10 –line stanzas (*decimas*) commonly sung in verses comprised with ten lines in a rhyme scheme - *abbaaccddc*, which develops a theme introduced by a quatrain (rhymed *abab*). Textual material may be set or improvised, religious or secular.
- Create own *decimas* in English or Spanish

### “El Pájaro Cu” (The Coo Bird)

- Listen to recording  
(c) Clap/Pat different patterns to 6/8 – (*sesquialtera*) Discuss meter/use rhythm sticks to tap out beats  
(a) Learn dance move and practice with and without the music  
Zapateado: Café con pan Café con pan  
LL R L RR L R  
1 2 3-4 5-6 1 2 3-4 5-6
- Ask students if they hear what type of instruments are being used; explain instruments through pictures, video, or having the instruments present; Ask students what instruments are common in other music?; What instruments are different?; Is the dance used an instrument?
- Explain the *zapateado* – rapid movement of the dancer’s feet against the ground or a *tarima* (raised wooden platform) producing a percussive accompaniment normally performed during instrumental interludes so the singing is not drowned out – (Grove Music Online); show video of dances
- Hand out lyrics in Spanish and English; discuss the lyrics and meanings; dissect 10 –line stanzas (*decimas*); Learn more about the poetic structure; try to create own lyrics using *decimas* in English and/or Spanish; try improvising

### Extensions:

- ❖ Lesson easily can be tailored to age group; for older students with more in-depth talk about issues of musical migration. From where does a particular music originate, change, and adapt when it travels and is recreated in different genres, cultures, and locations? Trace songs

through different musical genres.

- ❖ Listen to more music from the region. Find videos that explain the different dances and dance moves; go watch a traditional folk dance company; create dances and songs; learn more about the costumes
- ❖ Invite local musicians and dancers to come and conduct a lecture or demonstration.
- ❖ Obtain other instruments of the ensemble and learn simple bass parts of the *Marimobola* (Chord pattern can be used on bass Orff instruments or other bass instruments), *Quijada*, *Cajon*; *Jarana*, etc. Listen to recordings for instrumental and *jarana* strum patterns; create a *cajon* or *tarima* for use in practice or performance.