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Teaching Music / Teaching Culture: From the Rhetorical to the Realities

Abstract: As music educators embrace the possibilities for a more inclusive education that is culturally connected to the wider world, there are productive avenues for reshaping curricular content and method. In this article, we propose world music pedagogy (WMP) as a means of growing intercultural understanding alongside musical skills and knowledge, and chronicle the ways in which Smithsonian Folkways Recordings, the Smithsonian Institution's record label and music archive, is at the forefront of turning postulations to practice through its development of a new curricular initiative titled Smithsonian Folkways Music Pathways (SFMPs). Taken together, WMP and SFMPs contribute significantly to diversifying and expanding the music curriculum in an era of societal transformation. In the interest of cultivating a deeper understanding of the wide world of music and musicians for their students, music educators will gain greatly from engaging with these recommended resources and pedagogical dimensions.

Keywords: world music pedagogy, WMP five dimensions, orality-aurality, Smithsonian Folkways Music Pathways, intercultural understanding



Photo of Patricia Shehan Campbell courtesy of the author



Photo of Jennifer M. Mellizo by Shelly Coulter

She's decided that, amid a whirlwind of calls to make the music curriculum more diverse, equitable, and inclusive, her students will know music as a cross-cultural and pan-human phenomenon. She's taught music to upper elementary and middle school students for six years, and she's met with success—orienting their musical experiences toward music literacy and with intent to build skills in singing and playing (recorders, xylophones, ukuleles, and percussion instruments). The music she chooses is “songful” and largely children’s songs and singing games, most of them coming from English-speaking cultural communities. All good. And yet . . . she believes she could expand the musical experiences of her young learners to the music of many more cultures (including oral-tradition cultures) and that if they can handle her introductory experiences with the greatness of Mozart, they can also get a firm grip on the brilliance of mariachi (Mexico), mbube (South Africa), mohori (Thailand), and merengue (Dominican Republic). She sees, too, that there are so many ways music could sit at the curricular core of efforts to grow an awareness of people and cultures. With dedication and determination, she’s resolved that her students will have experiences in “the big music” of many cultures so to foster their musical and intercultural understanding. Still, she could use some help.

In a time of unprecedented change worldwide, with cultures across the globe closing in on one another, the fostering of intercultural understanding is more necessary than ever before. Music educators join educators across subjects in taking responsibility for opening the minds of students to more of the world’s cultures. They may well have the advantage of doing so, in that music is an enticing sensory experience that can effectively bring pieces of the planet into the lives of their students. Music is compelling and powerful, and it invites students to listen up and to take part as singers, dancers, and players. From the musical experiences students already know to culturally unfamiliar music from across the world, music educators can

provide opportunities for the development of students’ musical skills and their knowledge of the people who make the music. Whether the featured music of a lesson is coming from Tibet or Tahiti, Korea or Kenya, songs, dances, and instrumental works are dynamic ways of knowing culture.

As music educators embrace the possibilities for a more inclusive education that is culturally connected to the wider world, there are productive avenues for reshaping curricular content and methods. School music teachers can both support students’ musicianship and help develop their cultural knowledge. We intend to shed light on music education’s potential to underscore music as a cross-cultural phenomenon and to illustrate ways by which diverse musical perspectives can be woven into the music curriculum. Ahead is a description of world music pedagogy as a means of growing intercultural understanding alongside musical skills and knowledge, and a chronicle of the ways in which the museum-based record label Smithsonian Folkways Recordings is at the forefront of turning postulations to practice.¹

Music Education’s Move into Cultural Considerations

Music education in the United States has come a long way from its initial establishment in the school curriculum of the mid-nineteenth century. Then, the repertoire was largely western European art music and utilitarian songs in the English language composed by educators keen to instill moral values in the lives of the young singers.² Standard works by European composers continued to constitute the repertoire of musical study in schools for more than a century—in classrooms, choirs, and instrumental ensembles—with attention to developing students’ notational literacy. By the 1920s, as waves of immigrants to the United States were changing school populations, there came a trickling of “songs of many lands” into the school curriculum (which then amounted to the limited expansion of the repertoire from western Europe to music from the rest of Europe). In the

1930s, interest in Latin American music in schools grew, resulting in the addition of Spanish-language songs from Mexico, like “De Colores” and “Cielito Lindo.” In the mid-twentieth century, postwar musicians and educators gave their attention to achieving international understanding and world peace through a more culturally expansive music repertoire and the establishment of international music organizations, such as the International Society for Music Education and the International Council for Traditional Music (recently renamed the International Council for Traditions of Music and Dance).³

By the 1960s and 1970s, school mandates were urging educators to globalize and multiculturalize their curricular efforts. It became necessary to rethink repertoire and pedagogical approaches, such that music educators were challenged to seek out musical diversity and the needs and interests of diverse student populations. The Tanglewood Declaration (1968) prompted the slow shifting from European-based musical content to a more inclusive curriculum comprising popular music, jazz, and music of the world’s cultures. In the heyday of “multicultural music education,” especially in the 1980s and 1990s, there came a proliferation of multicultural materials in textbooks, on recordings, and eventually through the internet. In selected schools at the turn of the twenty-first century, music educators were developing “African” drumming ensembles, steel bands akin to those in Trinidad, Mexican mariachi, and floor-sized marimba bands modeled after those of sub-Saharan African cultures. Granted, much of the oral-tradition music was taught and learned via fixed and “frozen” notation,⁵ and yet, diversity had gained a toehold in the music curriculum. In the post-9/11 era, a fear of foreigners brought about a subtle redefining of musical diversity to encompass down-home American roots music, with emphasis on music prominent in African American, Latin American, Indigenous Native American, and Asian American communities.⁵ Still, experience and study of world music cultures continues

to be in evidence, resounding in selections of music from the Americas, Africa, Asia, and the Pacific heard in classrooms and school performances.⁶

Yet, even in peak moments of attention to diversifying music education practices, there are areas of need yet to be fully addressed by the profession relative to repertoire, teaching techniques and learning modes, and cultural contextualization. While there is plenty of rhetoric in recent years, there are realities to reckon with: (1) University teacher education programs still provide little in the way of knowing the world's music cultures. Thus, teachers must learn world music cultures while "in service" as practicing teachers and not as part of their degree program.⁷ (2) Musical cultures each have their own complexities, such that children's songs are not the peak musical expressions of a people. Teachers do well to offer their students a musical spectrum that encompasses some of the more sophisticated "adult" musical forms alongside children's songs and singing games. (3) The experience of knowing oral-tradition music is missed when Western staff notation is employed. Thus, teachers need to provide students with experiences in the common cross-cultural process of learning by ear. (4) The standard focus in American music education practice is on the sonic-only features. Teachers do well to embrace music as a multisensory experience whereby music in many cultures is simultaneously sung, played, danced, and interwoven into the dramatic arts. (5) Music without contextualization may prove less meaningful. In this regard, teachers must find ways to deepen students' understanding of music through the integration of an interdisciplinary mix of history, geography, language, and backstories of the musicians to clarify music's broader cultural meanings.

Bruno Nettl's well-reasoned statement underscores the essence of the music-culture relationship: "Music can be best understood as an aspect of the culture of which it is a part, and understanding can in turn help us to understand the world's

cultures and their diversity."⁸ John Blacking's study of Venda children's music substantiated his belief that music is a fundamental attribute of human nature and that music offers an understanding of the significant role not only of music in culture but also of culture in music.⁹ Music education scholars have engaged with principles brought forth by these ethnomusicologists.¹⁰ In addition, research in music education has demonstrated that musical experience and study leads not only to a deeper musicianship but also to multicultural sensitivity, a "respectful resonance" of students with the musicians they learn from and learn about, and a culturally expansive understanding of music and people.¹¹ Cultural goals are critically important in the comprehensive all-subject curriculum, and they are readily met through the collective musical experiences that teachers can facilitate with their students. Likely results of a musical education, then, encompass the development of performance skills, an understanding of melodies and rhythms at play within the music, occasions for developing newly creative expressions that are inspired and influenced by the music under study, and the honing of students' intercultural understanding and global dispositions.¹²

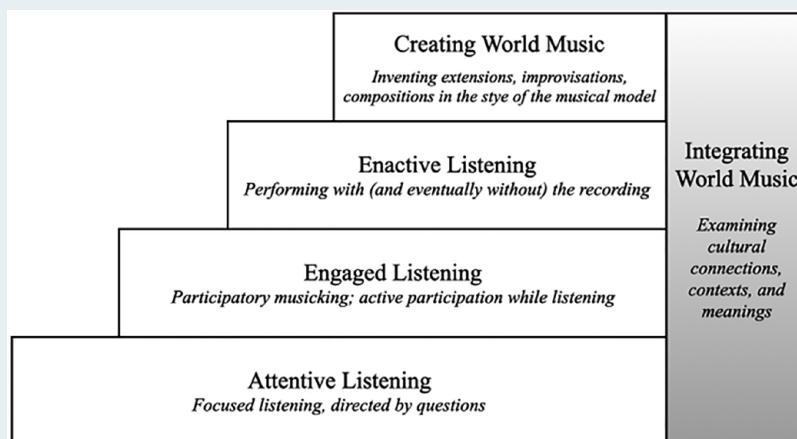
World Music Pedagogy: A Landing and a Launch

As a result of a continuing movement to globalize the curriculum, practicing teachers at the crossroads of ethnomusicology and music education are developing curriculum that draws students into intercultural understanding through musical involvement. Earlier efforts in teaching music of selected cultures and genres have dovetailed into world music pedagogy (WMP), a five-dimension approach that guides students through musical learning: attentive listening, engaged listening, enactive listening, creating world music, and integrating world music (shown in Figure 1). The approach was crafted by Patricia Shehan Campbell to describe a phenomenon of teaching practice grounded in ethnomusicological precepts that include "the oral tradition" (and fuller attention to orality and aurality) and the integration of music's cultural meanings through the backstories of the musicians within the "origin culture."¹³

With cognitive processes in mind, WMP was shaped to attend to the gradual immersion of students into participatory roles as "music-makers." Because such a goal is a lifetime journey, rather than targeting technical skills and

FIGURE 1

The Five Dimensions of World Music Pedagogy (WMP)



Source: Patricia Shehan Campbell, *Teaching Music Globally* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

knowledge in one specific (Western art) musical practice, WMP seeks to provide concrete pedagogical tools that can be easily applied across a wide variety of musical learning contexts.¹⁴ The pedagogy is intent on providing students of every age and experience avenues for knowing music of many cultures, of varying degrees of familiarity and complexity, from listening through to performance, and with an interdisciplinary framing of the music sociologically and historically.

WMP aims to expand perspectives on music and culture and concerns itself with the role of music within its culture of origin, how it functions, for whom, and for what reasons. Because it evolved in the hands of ethnomusicologically tuned educators, WMP claims three principles within the process of teaching and learning music of the world's cultures: (1) *orality-aurality*, that is, learning by listening (and without notation or transcriptions); (2) *ngoma*, the sub-Saharan pro-Bantu descriptor of music's mix with all the arts, including dance, drama, storytelling, costuming, and the like; and (3) *music as culture*, in which the music's reflection of cultural heritage and values is studied and understood. In addition, WMP suggests that the imitation of the music's model in participation and performance can lead to students' involvement in making the music their very own by way of improvisation, composition, and other creative ventures.

Beginning in 2004, WMP began to make its way into school and university practice, in no small part through Oxford's Global Music Series of books and recordings. The 29 authors of the 27 books, all ethnomusicologists, featured their selected musical concepts (and recording tracks) in print and in workshop presentations, and educators prepared instructional manuals as companion materials for the series that they, too, workshopped for teachers. Eventually, WMP began to be known through the Routledge World Music Pedagogy Series of seven volumes, published from 2018 to 2021, which confirmed that the pedagogy could be applied to learners

from preschool through college, in classes as well as in choral and instrumental ensembles.

The Folkways Focus on Education

From the founding by Moses Asch and Marian Distler of Folkways Records & Service Co. in 1948, education has been an important pillar of the Folkways record label. It was Asch's intent to provide documentation of the world of sound in recordings through Folkways and to offer to teachers and school librarians recordings that would capture songs (and spoken word, including speeches and poetry) from across the world for the purposes of knowing people and cultures. Acquired by the Smithsonian Institution in 1987, Smithsonian Folkways Recordings is now both an archive and a record label, encompassing over 70,000 tracks that feature legendary musicians like Woody Guthrie, Leadbelly, and Pete Seeger; influential children's song singers Ella Jenkins and Elizabeth Mitchell; and Grammy Award-winning groups such as Mariachi Los Camperos, Quetzal, and Los Texmaniacs. Recently featured artists include Rhiannon Giddens, who was signed by the label in 2019 to produce "Our Native Daughters"; Jake Blount, banjoist, singer, and scholar, who was invited to the label in 2022 to offer his Afrofuturist renderings of African American roots music; and No-No Boy, a project of Vietnamese American musician Julian Saporiti, who sings the stories of immigrants and the Asian American experience in the United States. A multitude of singers, instrumentalists, and poets—and even the sounds of animals, insects (crickets, Katydid, and wasps), and 1960s' office machinery—have been captured on Folkways recordings that have made their way into classrooms.

Beginning in 2008, the Folkways focus on education intensified with an initiative that curator-director Daniel E. Sheehy and board member Patricia Shehan Campbell referred to as "TNT:

Teachers Nexus Teachers," a means of urging dynamic change to curricular content and method through a more musically diverse repertoire that could be known by teachers and their students through Folkways recordings. This TNT effort joined the timely emergence of WMP in circles of teachers who were seeking to globalize their repertoire. Folkways staff partnered with music educators in workshops to provide sessions on "routes to roots music" and lessons on vocal and instrumental music of world cultures, in part to exemplify how selected recordings could serve as learning resources. The more thoroughgoing attention by Smithsonian Folkways to education was also apparent in its support of university music educators in its weeklong WMP courses, which brought about the establishment of Music-Culture Curriculum Projects, which were in essence WMP-inspired lessons crafted by teachers.¹⁵ These lessons are featured under "Learn" on the Smithsonian Folkways website as "free resources for the classroom."¹⁶

Looking Forward: Smithsonian Folkways Music Pathways

In 2020, then curator-director Huib Schippers assembled a team of ethnomusicologists and music educators at Smithsonian Folkways Recordings and began developing a new set of educational resources called Smithsonian Folkways Music Pathways (SFMPs). Building on Smithsonian Folkways Recordings' rich history of educational resources and recordings for children, the core vision for this curriculum initiative was to provide K–12 teachers and learners with free and easy access to well-researched, culturally diverse learning materials that utilize the transformative power of music—placing it at the center of learning experiences across subjects within the school curriculum.

In a nutshell, SFMPs are in-depth, curated journeys of discovery that provide a solid basis for teachers to explore important cultural, historical, social, and/or musical themes with their

students. They feature active encounters with primary sources (i.e., tracks from the Smithsonian Folkways catalog). The first set of SFMPs explores the development of music genres in the United States (*Listen What I Gotta Say: Women in the Blues*; *Cajun and Zydeco Music: Flavors of Southwest Louisiana*), music associated with social movements (*Estoy Aquí: Music of the Chicano Movement*), cultural preservation/adaptation (*Hear Us Out! Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Their Music*), and music traditions from around the world (*Fiesta Aquí, Fiesta Allá: Music of Puerto Rico*; *May It Please Your Highness: Music of the Asian Courts*). Many of these topics are intended to reflect the demographic diversity of American classrooms, ensuring that more students can see their histories and cultural values represented in the school curriculum. Some lean into culturally responsive teaching too, in that the musical practices, pedagogical approaches, and suggested activities featured in the Pathways validate and build upon students' cultural references, preferred learning styles, musical and social identities, family connections, and personal musical preferences.¹⁷ Other SFMP topics are more culturally expansive in that they highlight music traditions from geographically distant places and/or different historical time periods.¹⁸ As students explore sonic characteristics that are more unfamiliar, they "develop a fuller awareness of musical sound."¹⁹ They also learn firsthand that music is a global, human phenomenon—sophisticated and meaningful musical practices can be found in, and learned through, music created and performed by artists from every corner of the world.

SFMPs are structured like a set of matryoshka dolls (wooden dolls of decreasing sizes placed inside one another). Each SFMP has three distinct layers: (1) themed pathway, (2) sub-themed lesson hubs, and (3) interdisciplinary paths.²⁰ At the pathway level, there is one broad, overarching theme (e.g., *Estoy Aquí: Music of the Chicano Movement*). The next layer consists of 10 to 12 individual lesson hubs that are

based upon subthemes (e.g., historical event, social issue, musical ensemble or instrument, featured musician, smaller geographic region). Teachers and learners are encouraged to explore the lesson content by proceeding down curated paths, which are tailor-made for different school subjects (ranging from general music to ensembles as well as social studies and language arts classes). This interdisciplinary weave of music, within the realm of other curricular subjects, piques students' curiosity, makes learning more vibrant and meaningful, and connects music with cultural context.²¹

SFMPs are delivered through a series of interactive online slideshows and detailed teacher's guides. Audio and video recordings from the vast Smithsonian Folkways collection are streamed directly through these slideshows, making the learning experiences easy to facilitate in a wide variety of educational environments (in person, hybrid, and online). The slideshows also integrate a wide variety of artifacts, images, artwork, documents, and educational resources from other Smithsonian units (e.g., National Museum of American History, Smithsonian American Art Museum, National Museum of African American History and Culture, Museum of the American Latino) and contain a plethora of rich, interesting, and accurate historical/cultural information that teachers can use to contextualize learning experiences.

SFMPs incorporate the WMP dimensions in a variety of ways. First, attentive listening is widespread as learners are encouraged to repeatedly listen to short segments of an audio track, focusing on important sonic characteristics. Next, engaged listening prompts students to "listen and do" (e.g., stepping the beat, clapping a rhythm, singing along). Over time, students work toward performing the music via enactive listening, matching what they hear to what (and how) they sing and play. The intent is to honor both the "old" (as in the original culture of the music) and the "new" (the instructional culture that emerges as students bring the music to life in the classroom setting).²² Oftentimes,

learners also have opportunities to enter into creating world music by making their own creative contributions to the process (e.g., writing a verse, improvising, creating an arrangement). Students experience the integrating world music dimension through contextual information that's interspersed throughout the learning process (e.g., Who performs this music? Why? Where? In what ways is this music historically and culturally important?).

It is important to acknowledge that all pedagogical approaches call for thoughtful, conscientious, and culturally sensitive teaching. We do not view WMP or new curricular resources (e.g., SFMPs) as magical remedies to ethical conundrums that sometimes arise when we include culturally unfamiliar music in the curriculum. Ultimately, it is each teacher's responsibility to enact this pedagogy and deliver the resource's content in ways that ensure the music is not misused and people and cultures are appropriately represented (and credited). WMP has grown out of decades-long discourses in ethnomusicology on the ethics of diversifying repertoire and pedagogical practices and the importance of proceeding with caution when teaching music from outside culturally familiar styles.²³ There is a fine line between cultural appreciation and cultural appropriation, so it is important for teachers to reflect on (and attend to) issues such as transmission norms, cultural context, and historical meanings.²⁴

Both WMP and SFMPs emanate from the views of culturally aware ethnomusicologists, folklorists, and educators who have consistently attended to ethical responsibilities in fieldwork and studio productions of music by musicians and who "recognize and respect the qualities of a collective group, including their aesthetic, cultural, social, and structural features and values."²⁵ Regarding SFMPs specifically, each resource contains a wealth of contextual information—researched and written collaboratively with music practitioners and cultural knowledge holders and subsequently vetted by ethnomusicologists. We therefore think these resources have unique

FIGURE 2

Landing Page for *Estoy Aquí: Music of the Chicano Movement*



FIGURE 3

Navigating Smithsonian Music Pathways



potential to help practicing music educators facilitate learning experiences that stay sensitive to the singers, players, dancers, and people at large of a given culture.

Sampling Pathways for Learning Music/Learning Culture

The following example unpacks one path from one lesson hub in one SFMP.

Beginning with the overarching theme of the pathway, this sequence demonstrates how the five dimensions of WMP are woven into learning experiences within these resources. Link to the landing page while following this section.

Estoy Aquí: Music of the Chicano Movement

Estoy Aquí: Music of the Chicano Movement (landing page shown in Figure 2) was written with middle school students

in mind (grades 6–8). It celebrates songs and genres that emerged as symbols of cultural pride during the Chicano movement (late 1960s–early 1970s) and highlights Chicano/a communities' important contributions to the American story.

Lesson Hub 5 of this pathway, "Themes and Leaders of the Chicano Movement," highlights the main causes championed by Chicano movement leaders and the musicians who helped spread their important messages. The icons that appear on the navigational slide (see Figure 3) communicate important information to the teacher: Paths 1 and 2 cover listening and historical-cultural connections. Our example follows Path 3, which features music-making as per the WMP dimensions. "Soy del Pueblo: Demonstrating Solidarity through Music" introduces an important song that became an anthem during the Chicano movement and prompts students to consider the important role musicians play in the context of social movements.

WMP in Smithsonian Folkways Music Pathways

Figure 4 highlights how attentive listening experiences open students' ears to the sonic structures used in this historic recording of "Soy del Pueblo" (in this case, instrumental timbre). The audio track is directly embedded into the slideshow and, with the click of a button, streams directly from the Smithsonian Folkways media server (which allows streams to be counted and artists and composers to be compensated accordingly). Figure 5 demonstrates how resources from Smithsonian museums (in this case, the National Museum of American History) support and enhance these attentive listening experiences. After identifying instruments utilized by musicians Flor del Pueblo, students can view images of these instruments.

Figure 6 highlights the power of engaged listening experiences. While listening to the track again, students are encouraged to actively engage by clapping a traditional clave rhythm while stepping to the half-note pulse.

After repeated opportunities to listen and develop familiarity with the song through attentive and engaged listening experiences, students are ready to take the next step. Figure 7 provides an example of an enactive listening experience. First, students are encouraged to play and sing rhythmic and melodic bits by ear. A transcription is provided to support and enhance the experience. Throughout the learning process, students are encouraged to return to the recording for the musical nuances. Over time, they rehearse and refine (and perhaps even present to an audience) their own performance of “Soy del Pueblo.”

Throughout the learning sequence, students have integrative opportunities to learn about the band’s musical influences (Latin American styles), the composer of the song (Carlos Puebla), and the meaning of the lyrics. They are invited to consider why a Cuban song was embraced by the Chicano/a community, ultimately becoming an anthem for the movement. This contextual information enhances the musical experience and leads students to a deeper understanding of the song. An example of how WMP’s integrating dimension is incorporated into SFMPs is shown in Figure 8. The inventive teacher will find ways to initiate creative elements through the course of this lesson, thus turning to the creating world music dimension, with suggestions for students to come up with dance movements, build in another rhythm, add further instruments, or provide a suitable introduction to the song.

Music Education at the Crossroads of Culture

Music educators are increasingly choosing to teach music with a capital *M*—Music—as a pan-human endeavor. Living in an international age, they are convinced of the benefits to their students of knowing music as a cross-cultural phenomenon and compelled to help them develop higher levels of intercultural understanding. Important lessons have emerged from historic

FIGURE 4

Attentive Listening in Smithsonian Folkways Music Pathways

Attentive Listening: Instrumentation

Listen to a short excerpt from a song that became popular during the Chicano movement (“Soy del pueblo” by Flor del Pueblo).

What instruments do you hear?

Click to play ▶

Lesson 5: Themes and Leaders / Path 3: “Soy del pueblo”

FOLKWAYS Smithsonian

FIGURE 5

Primary Sources Embedded in Slideshow That Support Attentive Learning Experiences

Attentive Listening: Instrumentation

This recording features instruments that are popular in many **Latin American genres**, particularly genres from Puerto Rico and Cuba:

- Voice
- Guitars
- Bass
- Percussion (including güiros, bongos, claves, timbales, and conga)

From Left to Right: Güiro, LP Bongo Drums, Claves, Remo Conga Drums. National Museum of American History.

Lesson 5: Themes and Leaders / Path 3: “Soy del pueblo”

FOLKWAYS Smithsonian

efforts to diversify and globalize musical experience and study in school settings: (1) Curricular music can be both culturally responsive and culturally expansive, such that students benefit from knowing music from home, neighborhood, and global communities. (2) The “big music,” that is, culturally iconic genres by adult musicians, deserves study by learners of all ages. (3) Students can

develop deep understandings of music and of the people who make it when given multiple opportunities to experience it through primary sources (e.g., audio recordings). (4) Students benefit greatly from learning music’s historical, cultural, and social contexts.

WMP provides a framework for teaching music and fostering intercultural understanding through its five

FIGURE 6

Engaged Listening in Smithsonian Folkways Music Pathways

Engaged Listening: Challenge Time!

Can you clap the syncopated clave rhythm while stepping side to side?

Click to play ▶

Lesson 5: Themes and Leaders / Path 3: "Soy del pueblo"

FIGURE 7

Enactive Listening in Smithsonian Folkways Music Pathways

Enactive Listening: Perform "Soy del pueblo"

Click on the button to access a full musical transcription of "Soy del pueblo" – playable by middle and high school students.

The transcription includes:

- A full score
- Three-part vocal harmony with lyrics
- Individual instrumental parts written out for guitar (two parts), bass, voice, bongos, güiro, and claves

"Soy del pueblo" Transcription

Lesson 5: Themes and Leaders / Path 3: "Soy del pueblo"

FIGURE 8

Integrating Historical and Cultural Context in Smithsonian Folkways Music Pathways

Integrating: Latin American Influences

During the Chicano movement (late 1960s/early 1970s), some songwriters and ensembles (e.g., the ensemble you just heard, Flor del Pueblo) were influenced by Latin American musical styles (such as the Cuban *son*), and wove these perspectives into their performance repertoire.

Rolas de Aztlán: Songs of the Chicano Movement, cover art (featuring Flor del Pueblo) by Communication Visual. Smithsonian Folkways Recordings.

Lesson 5: Themes and Leaders / Path 3: "Soy del pueblo"

dimensions. Smithsonian Folkways Recordings partners with culture bearers, ethnomusicologists, and sound engineers to offer a wide selection of well-contextualized musical recordings featuring artists from all over the world. Taken together, they respond to lessons our field has learned over the past several decades and contribute significantly to diversifying and expanding the music curriculum in an era of societal transformation. In this article, we featured one specific example from a new curriculum resource, SFMPs, which draws upon WMP to deliver musical and cultural learning experiences that reflect changing student demographics, respond to student interests and cultural references, and expand students' musical horizons beyond what is already familiar. Each SFMP provides opportunities and ideas for teachers to shape unique learning experiences for their students.²⁶ In the interest of cultivating a deeper understanding of the wide world of music and musicians for their students, today's music educators will gain greatly from engaging with these resources and pedagogical dimensions.

She believes that she's in it for the long run, teaching music to children, and that she'll serve them musical experiences that are as diverse as the cultural communities living locally and across the world. She simply had not learned the brilliant music of the world in her university studies, and even her methods courses had given her reason to believe that a musical education was primarily about notational literacy, Western art music, and children's songs. "Soy del Pueblo" is a lesson that is working for her middle school students, who are singing, playing, and moving to the groove of Afro-Cuban rhythms (as played by a Chicano band!). They're learning the music, they're connecting to the culture, and they are suddenly tuned in and even enthusiastic in class sessions. She's learning of the world's musical cultures right along with her students, and she's come to terms with music as oral tradition and the pedagogical principle (and cultural priority) of "learning by ear." She's

sought and found plentiful resources within the Folkways collection, and she's delivering lessons of "big and little music" from within the SFMPs, from the simple to the sublime, via the dimensions of world music pedagogy. Her response to calls to diversify the music curriculum is that she's "doing it," leading her students toward deeper musicianship, encouraging their curiosity, and promoting genuine intercultural understanding.

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NOTES

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18. Dahm, "Postcolonial Music Teaching and Learning," 35. Dahm describes culturally expansive teaching as providing students with opportunities to engage with musical cultures from outside of their own experience.
19. Campbell, *Teaching Music Globally*, 41.
20. Jennifer M. Mellizo, "Diverse and Inclusive Educational Resources for the Music Classroom and Beyond," *Smithsonian Magazine*, February 23, 2022, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/blogs/smithsonian-education/2022/02/23/diverse-and-inclusive-educational-resources-for-the-music-classroom-and-beyond/>.
21. Janet Revell Barrett, *Seeking Connections: An Interdisciplinary Perspective on Music Teaching and Learning* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2023); Campbell, *Music, Education, and Diversity*; Anthony M. Pellegrino and Christopher Dean Lee, *Let the Music Play! Harnessing the Power of Music for History and Social Studies Classrooms* (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2012).
22. Campbell, *Teaching Music Globally*.
23. Campbell, *Music, Education, and Diversity*.
24. Karen Howard, "Equity in Music Education: Cultural Appropriation versus Cultural Appreciation—Understanding the Difference," *Music Educators Journal* 106, no. 3 (2020): 68–70.
25. William J. Coppola, David G. Hebert, and Patricia Shehan Campbell, *World Music Pedagogy, Volume VII: Teaching World Music in Higher Education* (New York: Routledge, 2021), 181.
26. Several Smithsonian Folkways Music Pathways resources are available now at <https://folkways.si.edu/learn>, with more to come.