

TEACHING UNIT

A comparative perspective of musical elements (rhythm, tempo, dynamics, melodic contour) and musical performance styles, across the European Mediterranean region

Dhónis the Swallow and Ría the Butterfly (Dhónis Chelidhónis and Ria Poumbouría)¹

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Musical goals

The children are expected to:

1. Recognize and aurally discriminate the rhythmic structures of the meters 6/8, 5/8 7/8, 4/4, 2/4 found in the musical material of the teaching unit, through attentive listening activities.
2. Become aware of the different rhythmic structures of 6/8, 5/8 7/8, 4/4, 2/4 found in the musical material of the teaching unit through the use of ostinati and melodic patterns.
3. Reproduce the rhythmic structures of the 6/8, 5/8 7/8, 4/4, 2/4 found in the musical material of the teaching unit, through engaged and interactive listening.
4. Aurally discriminate the phrases and different sections of the musical material of the teaching unit.
5. Reproduce the phrases and sections (AABB, AB, ABA) of the musical material through improvised movement, dance movement and instrumental orchestration suitable to the aesthetic impression of the material.
6. Sing correctly, interpreting selected phrases, words and melodic patterns of the musical material.
7. Reproduce the changes and contrast of different musical styles, dynamics and tempi.
8. Increase their comparative awareness and demonstrate how rhythm, tempo and phrasing have been used differently by each country and musical tradition in articulating meanings and emotions.
9. Demonstrate such contrast in their improvisations (bodily, instrumental and vocal).
10. Assign different musical identities to themselves and to each other, in reproducing and further creating musical performances of the musical material.
11. Compose and orchestrate a fairytale musically, by developing different mini-holistic events that reflect the different scenes of the plot.
12. Demonstrate self-conscious efforts of correcting, refining and improving their musical skills.

Socio-cultural goals

The children are expected to:

1. Discuss the custom of spring carols in the Greek world and discuss the meaning of the *Chelidhónisma* carol.
2. Discuss the link between the arrival of spring and the swallows.
3. Discuss the song's content with other customs related to these two elements.
4. Discuss the meaning of lullabies, their emotional character, the voice timbre and their musical interpretation in order to soothe a baby to sleep.
5. Discuss the meaning of the song *I Poumbouria* and its poetic metaphors.
6. Discuss that the song *I Poumbouria* is sung in Cypriot dialect which is used only on the island of Cyprus.
7. Discuss the meaning of the Cypriot dance, *Tatsiá*, and its origin.

¹ Although the teaching unit is comprised of six lessons, the teacher might choose to extend, omit or add some parts.

8. Locate on the map the island of Cyprus, Spain and the Basque country and conceptualize the geographical space of the Mediterranean Sea and its relation to land.
9. Link the meaning of the dance and its virtuosic character with other similar dances from their region/country.
10. Discuss the relationship of the dancer with the audience as the different sections of the dance unfold in relation to the dancer's improvisation.
11. Discuss the concept of virtuosity in traditional dances such as the *tatsiá* dance and other known dances.
12. Develop an initial awareness between the dancer and the audience communication.
13. Demonstrate the sociocultural knowledge given to them and investigated by them in this teaching unit.
14. Discuss issues pertinent to the Mediterranean Sea such as its meaning to people living on its shores, its characteristics, customs, songs and poems related to it.
15. Discuss the concept of prophesy/oracle.
16. Locate the Basque country and discuss certain facts about it.
17. Discuss about the olive tree, its products and usefulness in man's life thus increase their appreciation for it.

Educational goals

The children are expected to:

1. Refer to world of butterflies, their lives and the different kinds with special reference to *Poumbouría*.
2. Gather information about the value of the olive tree and its product, and appreciate its uses to man's life throughout the centuries.
3. Discuss the meaning of solidarity and find ways to exercise it in their everyday life with their friends and families.
4. Develop mini-stories in different moments of the story that incorporate the concept of solidarity.
5. Discuss their emotions in relation to the musical material and how musical elements and their interpretations can give rise to different emotions.
6. Explore, manipulate and select, reject, actively pro-act and react, shape the lessons' development and the final accomplishment of the lesson's goals.
7. Demonstrate problem-solving capacities and critical thinking.
8. Demonstrate social skills by developing social cohesion in the different learning activities within musical processes.
9. Develop and perform mini musical stories of different parts of a fairytale in order to add to its adventurous character and cultivate their creativity to 'unknown ends'.

Children's age:

5 ½ -6 ½ years old

Children's prior knowledge and Skills

Children are able to clap the steady beat, the emphasis and the words of a song, sing in tune, and demonstrate large motor movements. They are aware of different kinds of human relationships and to verbally express themselves using a variety of adjectives. They are able to express judgmental opinions and critical thinking.

Materials

Greek *Chelidhónisma* Spring carol

Cypriot *Poumbouría* song

Basque lullaby *Aurtxo Seaskan*

Cypriot *Tatsiá* dance

Classroom instruments; pitched and non-pitched, blue fabric, green fabric, white pieces of paper and colour pencils, swallow finger puppet, butterfly finger puppet, witch finger puppet, paper made moon, sun, flowers and a tower picture.

Lesson Plan 1: *Chelidhónisma* and the Coming of spring

Musical goals

The children are expected to:

1. sing (a) the whole song, or (b) the second word of each phrase or (c) the last phrase of the song².
2. Articulate the phrasing of the song with improvised body movements and/or change of direction as the swallow flies.
3. Demonstrate the strong beat of each meter with (a) uplifting hand clap, (b) with lifting up the fabric as a group (b) with the use of pitched and non-pitched instruments.
4. Perform the 5/8 rhythm of the song through listening activities combined with using movements and instruments.
5. Express the flowing soft character of the song, with the appropriate vocal, instrumental and bodily interpretation (a) as they listen to the recording of the song (b) as the teacher sings it with the children.
6. Discuss the interpretation of the song, their feelings to it and make decisions for the musical goals.
7. Discuss the two different recordings of the song and express critical thinking and personalized preference.

The beginning of the story

Once upon a time, on the island of Cyprus in the Mediterranean Sea, *Dhónis Chelidhónis* and *Ría Poumbouría* met. *Ría Poumbouría* was eagerly waiting in her silkworm cocoon for spring to come. *Dhónis Chelidhónis* just came from afar, sat on a tall tower, and chirped “*Márti Márti mou kalé*” (‘March, March, my dearest March’) announcing that finally Spring is here and although there might still be snowy and cold days, Spring has finally arrived.

Description of the lesson plan

1. Present to the children, the puppet swallow of *Dhónis Chelidhónis* and sing the song to the children executing motions that reflect the phrasing of the song with large-scale motor movements.
2. Discuss with the children the arrival of the swallows and the coming of spring.
3. Introduce to the children three verbs from the song, which are found at the end of each of the first three phrases of the song’s first verse. The verbs are: ‘*pétase*’ (flew), ‘*ki’ékatse*’ (and sat) and ‘*kai chamó-keláidhise*’ (chirruped quietly). Invite them to connect each verb with a movement.

² Children who speak Greek or the Greek Cypriot dialect might be able to gradually sing all the verses, while non-Greek speakers might focus on certain words and/or the last phrase of each verse.

Pé - ta - se Ki é - ka - tse

kai cha - mo - ke - laí - dhi - se

4. Tell them that you will sing the song (or put the recording with the solo female voice which is of slower tempo than the chorus recording) and stop when it is time for the verbs to be sung, inviting the children to join in and sing the verbs correctly with the movements.

5. Repeat the activity several times.

Introduce the word '*chelidhóni*' with its melodic contour and its 5/8 clapping rhythm and invite the children to dance to it in various ways while singing it. Choose with them the most preferred one.

Che - - li - - dhó - - - ni

6. Tell children that the swallow needs help to go higher in its flight and invite them to clap in uplifting motion the strong beat of 5/8 as they listen to the recording of the song or as you sing with them. Model with them and repeat the activity.

7. Practice the 5/8 in the following way: have one group with sticks singing '*chelidhóni*' (x2) while the other group sings and performs rhythmically each verb (with musical instruments or body percussions) in the following manner (form AbAcAdA): *chelidhóni - pétase - chelidhóni - ki'ékatse - chelidhóni - kai chamó-keláidhise - chelidhóni*. The 3rd verb has a greater degree of difficulty so it needs more practice.

Che - - li - - dhó - - - ni

Pé - ta - se

Ki é - ka - tse

kai cha - mo - ke - laí - dhi - se

8. Sing the song or use the recording and ask the children to perform with instruments or body percussions the 5/8 rhythm. Use the pattern (in previous step) or just the word ‘*chelidhóni*’ (twice) as an introduction to the song instead of counting. Sing this introduction to the first note of the song.
9. Discuss with the children about the character of the song, their mental pictures and their feelings. Invite them to create drawings and note down their verbal reflections about them.
10. Invite improvised movements as they listen and/or sing the song.
11. Give them scarves and invite them to become swallows, fly around and interpret the song with improvised movement.
12. Discuss their interpretations with them in order to improve and orchestrate the song with the recording/or singing it, instruments, a piece of material, voices and movements. Encourage them to make their own choices. Different children assume differentiated musical roles that reflect musical goals, as you point to good practices among the children and assist them to consciously correct themselves.

Expected outcome –Evidence of learning

Perform the song as steps 12 and 13 indicate.

Lesson Plan 2 & 3: Ría Poubouría meets Dhóni Chelidhóni

Musical goals

The children are expected to:

1. Review the material from Lesson 1 and reinforce the musical goals to a higher quality.
2. Execute the ostinato “*Márti Márti Mou Kalé*” and “*Chelidhóni*” in 5/8 rhythm and in word rhythmic pattern.
3. Perform the verbs ‘*pétase*’, ‘*ki’ékatsé*’ and ‘*chamó-keláidhise*’ melodically and rhythmically.
4. Execute the ostinato “*xípna xípna Poubouría*” in 7/8 rhythm.
5. Create a musical synthesis with various ostinati and melodic patterns.
6. Recognize the sameness of melodic pattern of the first and second verse and of the fourth and fifth verse in the song *I Poubouría*.
7. Sing correctly (with ‘la’, ‘o’, etc., with the lyrics, or selected words, or new words set to the melodies) the two different melodic patterns of the song showing an understanding of the ascending contour of the first, and the descending melodic line of the second one.
8. Execute the phrases of the song in their movements and melodic lines.
9. Execute the rhythm of 7/8 by reproducing the ostinato while listening to the song.
10. Execute other ostinati using the phrases ‘*Poubouría pétasen*’ and ‘*pas to fkióron ékatsen*’.
11. Discuss the differences between the two songs *Chelidhónisma* and *Poubouría* in terms of rhythm, tempo, voice timbre and interpretation.
12. Dance to the two songs using scarves (individual improvisation) and material (group improvisation), using the two ostinati for introducing each song.

The continuation of our story

Ría Poubouría woke up, raised her head outside her silkworm cocoon, accepting this joyful message with happiness and welcoming the warmth of the sun. She opened her wings and flew to the sweetest smelling flower. There, drunk by its smell, she fell into a deep sleep. *Dhónis Chelidhónis* immediately flew and woke her up: “*xípna xípna poubouría*” (‘wake up wake up Poubouría’). *Ría Poubouría*

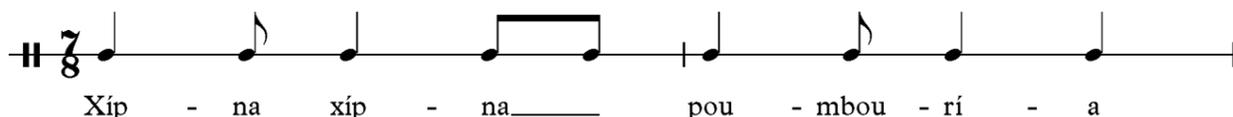
woke up upset, because her most beautiful dream was interrupted; she dreamt that she was marrying the sun and the birds and the moon were her maids of honour and best men in her wedding.

Description of the lesson plan.

1. Remind the children the content of the previous lesson and the different rhythmic ostinati as well as the melodic patterns of the different words.
2. Tell them that they need to show that children want spring to come to bring nature to blossom. Ask them to perform the ostinati in their free interpretation to show their eagerness. Extend it with the text “*kai Aprili Dhroseré*” and allow them time to practice and experiment with it.



3. Collaborate with the children in developing differentiated musical identities, employing instrumental/body percussion ostinati and the words from the song *Chelidhónisma* and developing a musical/rhythmic piece of a specific form (AbAcA) such as *chelidhóni pétase, chelidhóni, ki'ékatsé, kai chamó-keláidhise*, “*Márti Márta mou kalé*” (x2), *chelidhóni pétase, chelidhóni ki'ékatsé, kai chamó-keláidhise*, “*kai Aprili Dhroseré*” (x2), *chelidhóni pétase, chelidhóni ki'ékatsé kai chamó-keláidhise*. Explore issues of dynamics, articulation, tempo and movement with them.
4. Introduce the ostinato “*xípna xípna Poubouría*” in 7/8 rhythm, by using a tambourine or cymbals initially for the strong beat of the phrase.



Explain that *Dhónis Chelidhónis* is trying to wake up *Poubouría* from her deep sleep but he doesn't want to scare her. Therefore, invite children to propose ways to excute the ostinato instrumentally, verbally and with body percussion. One option would to start in piano pianissimo and gradually increase the volume. Another activity would be to only tap the strong beat (the emphasis of the phrase) while replacing the rhythmic chanting of the phrase to melodic singing.

5. Ask the children to close their eyes and listen to the *Poubouría* song. Invite their reflections and assist them to notice differences in rhythm and articulation. Play the first song and ask them to compare. Children can demonstrate their understanding with ways beyond verbal explanations such as vocalization, movement or drawing.
6. Sing the first two phrases in 'la' or any other vocalization and ask them to use their body or just their hands or fingers, to draw the ascending or descending line of each phrase.
7. Explain the meaning of the song and show similar words such as ‘*pétase*’, ‘*ki'ékatsé*’ but tell them that *Poubouria* instead of singing, slept as the swallow flew.
8. Sing each phrase, explain the meaning and ask the children to create movements. Give them scarves to move in a flowing legato manner to the first stanza and sticks to rhythmically hit to the second stanza. Such activity will help them internalize the AB form of the song. Add the ostinati with body percussion and rhythmic instruments.

Poum - bou - rí - a pé - ta sen

Pas to fkió - ron é - ka tsen

9. Use a length of fabric to show with moving it, the different sections of the *Poumbouria* song. Put a butterfly doll or a drawing for the *Poumbouria* song on the fabric.
10. Use fabric movements to show the different sections of the Greek carol. Perform the two songs interchangeably.

Expected outcome - Evidence of learning

The children are expected to discuss the differences between the two songs *Chelidhónisma* and *Poumbouría* in terms of rhythm, tempo, voice timbre and interpretation or show their understanding in terms of body movement. They should explain how these are related to the mellow light flying of the swallow and the fast, up-down shifting flying of the butterfly. They express these differences in their movement and in their singing and instrumental playing in varied idiosyncratically different ways. Children draw swallows and butterflies and use them while dancing to the songs. Dance the two songs using scarves (individual improvisation) and fabric (group improvisation) using the two ostinati for introducing each song. Allow the children to select their musical roles and improvise creatively with them.

Lesson Plan 4: The Meeting with Magic *Tatsiá*

Musical goals

The children are expected to:

1. Aurally discriminate the two different melodies and the ABA form of the *tatsiá* dance.
2. Aurally discriminate the two rhythmic sections (a) 2/4 and (b) 5/8 (an unusual meter for Cypriot traditional dances) and demonstrate suitable body movements.
3. Demonstrate their own movements to each section, repeating the movements for the first section in its second appearance, reflecting the rhythmic characteristics of the sections.
4. Execute *tatsiá* shaking and turns in different direction using the fabric while listening to the recording.

The next episode

Dhónis Chelidhónis laughed: “I can be your best man, but you need to find the moon and persuade him to come to your wedding. If you don’t succeed then the sun will refuse to marry you. The moon and he are best friends”. The sun, listening to their conversation, nodded his head in agreement with the swallow. *Ría Poumbouría* was deeply troubled. “Where can I find the moon and how can I persuade him to come to my wedding?” *Dhónis Chelidhónis* rubbed his head with his wing thinking deeply. “I know”! He exclaimed. “We need to ask the magic *tatsiá* and its dancer; you will be asked to put with your left hand a handful of seeds in the *tatsiá*. As the dancer dances, he shakes the *tatsiá* and moves it around, so the seeds spread on the floor forming shapes that only he can understand and interpret. When he finishes she will tell you what to do.”

Description of the lesson plan

1. Recount the story with the children and continue its narration.
2. Explain the meaning of the *tatsiá* dance and show them video recordings about it.



(Cypriot dancer Nektarios Foris)

3. Isolate A section and explain that in the A sections, the dancer invites the audience to clap to demonstrate their admiration for his virtuosic dancing to encourage him to do it even better.
4. Invite the children to listen to the first section and verbally describe it.
5. Invite children to improvise the steady beat in 2/4 rhythm while listening to the recording based on their verbal reflections. They should stop for section B and resume for the repetition of section A (ABA form).
6. Give them paper plates to imitate the original item of *tatsiá*.
7. Ask children to listen to the B section and verbally describe it.
8. Ask the children to stand up and in pairs to devise movements for the B section which is the section of the virtuosic dance movements. Draw their attention to the changes in the music and how these can be represented in body movements.
9. Children present their dances. They can imitate the original dance by holding paper plates and moving them around or they can devise something completely different.
10. Perform the dance in the following way: Half of the children dance. The other half of the children forms a semi-circle around the dancers, bended on one knee, and clapping for the dancers. Explain to the children that if the dancing is suitable to the music and impressive then their clapping needs to reflect it while in other cases when the dancing is not then the handclapping should reflect that accordingly. Children practice the activity. Then they switch roles and the activity is repeated.

Expected outcome- Evidence of learning

Dance of the children as described in steps 8 and 10.

Discuss and demonstrate the concept of virtuosity in the *tatsiá* dance and their movements in the B section. How a dancer can make his dance virtuosic and safe at the same time? Discuss the notion of excellence in relation to music and dance.

Lesson Plan 5: The Journey to the Basque Country

Musical goals

The children are expected to:

1. Demonstrate correct execution of the 5/8 & 7/8 ostinati from the two songs *Chelidhónisma* and *Poumbouría*.
2. Demonstrate singing of those parts of the song they practiced in the previous lessons.
3. Demonstrate the phrasing and melodic contour of the songs' melodies the length of fabric.
4. Create musical roles with specifically assigned musical elements.
5. Create a musical scene with the two friends' journey with individual and group improvisations.

The next episode of our story

The magic *tatsiá* and the dancer revealed the following:

“You must travel to the far end of the Mediterranean Sea to the Basque country, to the end of the Mediterranean, find the Mediterranean treasure and wait until the full moon comes out in the night. There you need to sing to him the Basque lullaby and ask him to come to your wedding. *Dhónis Chelidhónis* will come with you but you must be ready to face the difficulties of travelling across the Mediterranean Sea”.

So *Ría Poumbouría* and *Dhónis Chelidhónis* began their difficult journey full of obstacles and dangers. Often solidarity would come in unpredictable ways. *Ría Poumbouría* would often get sad and tired as the journey looked endless for her. Then ‘*tramountána* (= south wind) would playfully shake her and uplift her. Other times ‘*nótos*’ (=north wind) would caress her to give her courage and strength. At first, *Ría Poumbouría* was scared of them, but soon she realized their positive and helpful power towards her. When she was tired she would rest on the back of her friend. Often cranes would welcome both friends on their back to rest.

Description of the lesson plan

1. Continue narrating the story with the children. Explain the concept of prophesy/oracle³.
2. Ask the children to bring photos of the sea and its different facets (stormy and calm, cloudy, different colors) poems and songs about it. Discuss issues pertinent to the sea, their experiences, fears, and attractions to it.
3. Create paper swallows, butterflies and boats with them.
4. Invite them to sit on the floor and hold a large blue fabric which represents the Mediterranean Sea. Put associated elements on it and choose movements that correspond to them and to the moods of the sea. Sing a familiar song about the sea, either alone or with the children.
5. Place a paper swallow on the fabric and ask the children to chant the 5/8 ostinato from *Chelidhónisma* “*Márti Márta mou kalé*” and they transfer its rhythmic pattern to the fabric.



6. Place a paper butterfly on the fabric and ask children to chant the 7/8 ostinato “*xípna xípna boumbouría*” and to move the fabric accordingly.

³ The teacher can connect this concept with myths from their local culture and country.

ointment and in oil lamps. Its leaves are also precious in healing people. The olive tree always welcomes man in its shadow to sit, rest, pray and gain strength. It is such an indispensable and integral part of our everyday life as Mediterranean people that we have taken it for granted, just like our breath, and we cannot imagine our lives without this most precious treasure that has been available to man for thousands of years!”⁴

The two friends were very happy to hear that and to know that their quest was coming to its end. They sat on an olive tree branch to rest. They needed the answers to two more questions: the first was what the Basque lullaby is and the second, which night the full moon is rising. Again, the olive tree valley people willingly gave the answers. The full moon was rising after two nights. Everybody declared that they knew the Basque lullaby and once they heard *Ría Poumbouría*'s story, they all gladly volunteered to sing it to the full moon. The full moon night arrived and everybody was ready. As the golden moon was taking its grand position on the night sky the Basque people began singing the Basque lullaby. *Ría Poumbouría* and *Dhónis Chelidhónis* mesmerised with the beauty of the lullaby were waiting for the moon's response. People's singing rose to the sky and the full moon face began smiling and nodding his head to *Ría Poumbouría* and *Dhónis Chelidhónis*. The full moon has agreed to come to *Ría*'s wedding to the Sun! Now both friends were very happy and ready to return home for the wedding's final preparations.

Description of the lesson plan

1. Narrate the story to the children with their help. Ask them to guess what the Mediterranean treasure might be. Invite them to create mini-stories of adventure and different endings and extensions to the story.
2. Gather with the children material connected to the olive tree and its products, sing familiar songs about it and discuss its usefulness. The topic can be cross-disciplinary connected with other subjects of the school curriculum.
3. Ask them to listen to the lullaby, comment on it and softly use their hands in movement while still seated.
4. Play the recording again and ask the children to softly clap and pat the steady beat or use sound material that reflect the same time the character of the song such as cymbals and shakers.
5. Ask them to listen to it again and this time to stay on the floor and move as they listen to it. Point to successful performances and invite the children to imitate them. Then point to better interpretations and invite the children to follow. Make sure that they freeze at the long note at the end of each phrase in order to reinforce the feeling of ending and of beginning with the next phrase.
6. Ask them to listen to it again and with scarves to move in three planes (floor, standing, and lift up on toes with hands high up) in the room and interpret the song in large motor movements.
7. Discuss the notion of solidarity and invite them to propose other ways that the two friends can get help.
8. Ask the children how they can help their friends and members of their families and thus cultivate this very important concept.

⁴ The olive tree has been one of the most prominent symbols of the Mediterranean sea throughout the centuries, as well as an important symbol of Christianity. As the French historian Fernand Braudel «*The Mediterranean ends where the olive tree ends; beyond there is the desert*». We thank Monica Cognoli, trainee music educator of the project who exploited this topic in her work.

Expected outcome - Evidence of learning

The children develop a songbook where the story is narrated, with pictorial representations, their drawings, of the different characters and elements. These characters and elements should be represented with specific musical materials from all the lessons (e.g. the swallow with the $5/8$ ostinato, the butterfly with the $7/8$ ostinato, the magic *tatsiá* with the dance movements and the rhythmic patterns in $2/4$, the sea, etc. The children perform the musical story of the book in combination with narration and devised dialogues.