

**TEACHING UNIT**  
**The Journey of a boat, a castle, a demon and a magical butterfly**  
**around the Mediterranean sea**

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**Musical goals**

Children are expected to:

1. Develop skills in the execution of binary, ternary and irregular meter.
2. Sing in tune, working with melodic pattern in context of the songs.
3. Sing the song by using the whole text or a part of it in the original language.
4. Experience and recognize the structure A – B.
5. Express feelings and creativity in movement performing

**Socio-cultural goals**

Children are expected to:

1. Know the origin and meaning of the songs, getting in touch with some traditions and in particular the use and context of these materials in their home countries.
2. Know and learn words in another language and associate their correct meaning to them.
3. Create group choreography. Respect the meaning and the original elements of the dance.
4. Approach and know popular instruments used during traditional festivals.
5. Acquire the skills that allow them to compare and mix different elements of the materials used.

**Educational goals**

Children are expected to:

1. Develop curiosity and interest for the other countries' customs.
2. Know the traditions associated with the musical material used.
3. Develop creativity and self-initiative in proposing their own ideas.
4. Working in groups, collaborating and developing the ability to play an effective role.
5. Manage their body in space: individual space, shared, free and structured movement, spatial awareness ("I can find my place in space").
6. Find an acknowledgment channel in the musical material through which it is possible for them to express and manage emotions and their own identity.
7. Use mimesis as a connection between: the musical material and social/cultural significance; the musical material and their personal significance; the starting point and the conclusion of their learning process.

**Children's age**

4/6 years

**Children's prior knowledge and skills**

- Basic language skills and ability to express their ideas and emotions.
- Knowledge of their body parts.
- Coordination of the body.
- Movement coordinated in space: forward / backward; above/under; approach to the lateral movement.

## Materials

Sound materials: *Poumbouria* (Cyprus), *Al pasar la barca* (Spain), *I trata mas i kourelou* (greek), *Oh che bel castello* (Italia), *Toanda de Sant Antoni* (Spain), *De sa coa des moixet* (Spain), *Ball de Sant ferriol* (Spain).

Teaching aids: The Very Hungry Caterpillar (book by Eric Carle).

Objects and instruments: coloured shapes, lycra, little coloured butterflies made of felt, scarves, coloured flowers, a pillow, drums, sticks, chimbomba, musical hand bells, cowbell, plastic cups, pins, straws, pieces of wood, paper boats.

## Lesson Plan 1: What is Poumbouria?

### Musical goals

Children are expected to:

1. Experience the odd 7/8 rhythmic meter with a rhythmic activity in motion.
2. Re-use a previously worked musical material (*I Trata*), and check therefore that the song was correctly assimilated.
3. Understand the meaning of the song and have a first contact with melody and rhythm.
4. Learn the words of the first sentence of the song and their meaning.
5. Sing the first part and gradually the whole song by practicing a mimesis activity through the story of the butterfly.
6. Experience free / structured movement in space.

### Description of lesson plan, processes and strategies

1. We leave for a trip, which will bring us in a distant country, Cyprus, where we are told that a mysterious and magical animal lives. We will travel on a sailboat and we will rise sails altogether. We recall *I Trata* by using the rhythm of its refrain and lyrics (gesture of raising sails)  
*Evira mia sta pania*  
*Evira dyo sto chorio*  
*Evira treis sto spiti tis*
2. Beginning of our trip. Through a rhythmic sequence in Spanish, we practice the odd 7/8 meter.

**Navego**

Na - ve - go len - to len - to na - ve - go len - to len - to na - ve - go len - to len - to

splash Re - ma y re - ma y na - ve - go len - to len - to splash

Children are sitting and swinging from right to left, they also swing their arms together with their body, as if they were little boats.

3. We arrive at Cyprus where we are told the story of Poumbouria, and we listen to the content of the song. We rhythmically repeat only the first sentence by using the original text "*I Poumbouria*

*pétasen*”; first, the teacher calls the butterfly and then, we invite the children to do the same. We use a precise sound and gesture to stress the rhythm (clapping or beating on our legs), and we eventually listen to children’s proposals. We listen to the song and try to recognize the sentence that we have just learned.

4. Poubouria comes. A felt-made butterfly represents Poubouria. She arrives and greets all children. The teacher therefore sings the melody by using the part of the text that children are already familiar with, whereas, neutral syllables will be used for the rest of it. The main pulse of 7/8 is kept while greeting each child with the butterfly (through a kiss, or by resting on a part of their body...) and then we let children say hello (either by touching it, or sending a kiss...). We look together for the meaning of the pronounced words and we guess to which language they belong.
5. Do we have wings? We introduce the second part of the first verse, where the butterfly goes to rest on a flower and falls asleep. We can represent this scene by putting a colourful flower on the floor at the centre of the circle.
6. Let’s fly! All children are provided with two scarves each, representing the butterfly’s wings. They practice their movement, while the teacher sings the second part of the verse by using neutral syllables. We can either sit or freely move or even move in circle. In the last part of the song, we can cover Poubouria by using our wings: she will stay in a certain place of the class to rest on her flower, until she falls asleep.
7. Bye-bye Poubouria! At the end of this activity, we say good-bye to Poubouria and we leave our wings in turn, while singing, in order to find them again in the following lesson.

### *Suggestions*

1. 7/8 meter. If children are not familiar with the odd 7/8 meter, it is possible to use any melody or rhythmic game whatsoever, but it is essential to always use a game and never simply imitate the teacher’s gesture.
2. Poubouria: the work on the text will be done more quickly if children already know the song or if they can speak Greek.

In order to develop this activity, it is possible to work on echoes in groups, such as teacher/children, containing the word ‘Poubouria’ and perform it once they have learned the first verse of the song:

Children:

*H Poubouría pétasen*

tje pas to fkióron ékatsen (frase sostituita da sillabe neutre)

Teacher:

*tje pou tin tósin mirothkián*

epotjimíthiken vathkiá (which will be replaced by neutral syllables)

3. The work can be further developed by letting children move and one of the them can play the role of Poubouria, while the rest of the group covers him/her with scarves. If the class is composed of many children, we can split them into small groups, and you choose two children playing the role of the butterfly at the same time.
4. Moreover, if children are not familiar with free movement experiences in space, it is necessary to make a prior introduction of such activity in order to let them learn to manage their movements.

### *Expected outcome*

- Getting familiar with the odd 7/8 meter
- Check children's level of learning of the already used material
- Learn words contained in the first verse of the song. Direct answers (correct repetitions) or indirect ones (for instance, by using movement to complete children's emotional involvement).

### *Evidence of learning*

Children should sing the part of the song proposed by the teacher as more correctly as possible. It is important that children that do not sing can be as correct as possible in their rhythmic participation and in their movement as well. Children sing the song in other different spaces and situations, while playing on their own.

## **Lesson Plan 2: Will the very hungry caterpillar ever become the Poubouria?**

### *Musical goals*

Children are expected to:

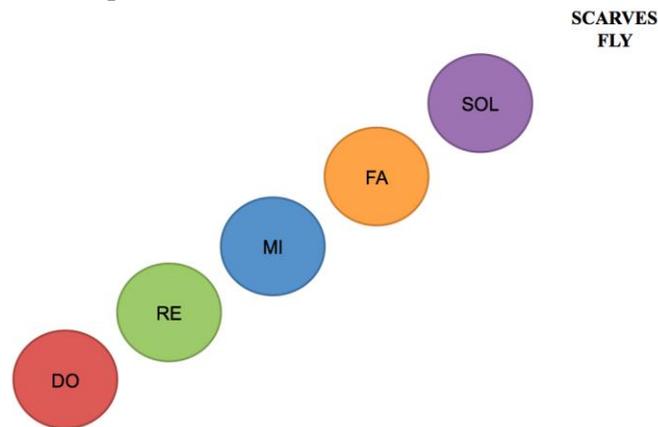
1. Internalize and consolidate the 7/8 meter
2. Singing in tune little melodic sequences within the tonal frame of the *Poubouria* song
3. Introduction of words in the second part of the song
4. Perform free movement activities associated to the song

### *Description of lesson plan, processes and strategies*

1. We continue our trip towards Cyprus, and we propose again the rhythmic activity of the boat. We always let children invent and propose their own different movements, either by rising up amongst the waves, or by any different gesture different than rowing. Children can also work in group and make a single big boat altogether.
2. We arrived at Cyprus. Here comes a new story on Poubouria: how was she born? We can use the book by Eric Carle 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. The teacher sets the story in the place that appears to be the most appropriate to develop this activity (for instance, in Madrid, our caterpillar was sleeping and then woke up in the Retiro park, in the city centre). The caterpillar decides then to start the same journey as the children's, heading for Cyprus, and to become a Poubouria by eating some magical fruits that only exist there.
3. Magical fruits. We read together the story of the caterpillar and once we arrive at the point where he eats fruits, something magical occurs: fruits make their own sound! We therefore work on the first 5 notes of Major C tonality, in which we have always sung and listened to the song of *Poubouria*. Each fruit corresponds to one single note. We can use some tuned bells to present fruits' sounds. The teacher sings the corresponding tunes while indicating the fruits and he/she invites children to repeat those sounds. To encourage them, it can be useful to tell them that all fruits must have very strong sounds and they all need to sing together if they want the magic to work! If this happens, the caterpillar will then become a wonderful butterfly.



4. Poubouria is born. We finish reading the story. We comment altogether and ask them whether they liked it or not, what they liked best and finally we listen to their reflections and questions.
5. Upon a flower she will rest and Poubouria will fall asleep. We learn the words contained in the second part of the song, in Italian, this time, in order to respect its original meaning. The teacher introduces the lyrics by using a flower and he/she sings the corresponding sentence and indicates the object (upon a flower she will rest). In the following sentence (and Poubouria will fall asleep) she will sing and indicate, at the same time, a pillow and she will pretend to sleep. Children can try to do the same, whereas the teacher helps them by indicating the two objects. After that, first we take away the flower, and then the pillow. If children are able to remember the lyrics anyway, the teacher can then take both objects away but he/she must always indicate the point where they were placed and we altogether sing the whole song.
6. Let's transform ourselves into Poubouria. We create a small path with 5 coloured Twister shapes on the floor. They should correspond to the colours of the fruits and also follow the order in which they appear in the book (in the drawing below they don't) and are consequently sung. In turn, children jump on the circles, singing the first five notes of C major so that they will finally find their wings at the end of the path:



7. Now we have wings so we can fly! Each child receives a coloured shape (their own flower) that he/she will put on the floor wherever he/she likes. We sing the song: in the first part, we can move freely while flying around the room; in the second part, every child goes to rest on his/her own flower and falls asleep. We play by intoning the range of dominant / tonic V-I to get to our flower; then, we use different melodic patterns to make the flowers make a sound. We repeat the activity by following the A-B structure till the end.
8. Let's go on our boat again, to leave the island: this time we sing the song *Al Pasar la barca*. We should use the same form of the boat as in the rhythm activity of the first lesson, by representing a

unique boat formed by all children sitting on the ground, one after the other, and also using the same movement.



### *Suggestions*

1. *The very hungry caterpillar*: There are several aspects of the history and possibilities to consider: you can work on rhythm, movement, weight, colours. Depending on your needs, on the development of the activity and on the time to spend on the literary material, you can choose one or more aspects to develop.
2. *Al pasar de la barca*: it deals with a Spanish folk song for children, already known by the group. However, you can choose any other song that can be useful and consistent with the activity and which children are familiar with.

### *Expected outcome*

- Internalization of the odd meter 7/8 and consolidation of skills.
- Use of melodic patterns and work on singing in tune.
- Learn lyrics of the second part of the song.
- Free movement activity in space, and first movement-singing coordination.

### *Evidence of learning*

The children sing the song even before the class starts or at the end of it. Some of them even improvise the text, not by associating it to Poubouria but to the action they are performing in that very moment. Their observations and comments in the debate, at the beginning and at the end of the class indicate a full understanding of the history, images and the socio-cultural context of the proposed activity.

## **Lesson Plan 3: Poubouria's journey**

### *Musical goals*

Children are expected to:

1. Remember the lyrics that were learned in previous classes.
2. Enhance what they learned in general in the previous lessons.
3. Create a final event to complete the activity, merging all the aspects taken into account. Mimesis experience.

### *Description of lesson plan, processes and strategies*

1. Poubouria must start her journey, to spread her magic and give wings to other children. We recall the song *I Trata* and when our boat is ready to sail, we start singing *Al Pasar la barca*. This time some children can imitate the movement of sails by using a very light cloth, while some

others can pretend to be the wind blowing on sails and the rest of them can play the role of the boat.



2. We have our wings again. The teacher can use this moment to recall the lyrics of the song. We repeat the colourful Twister shapes activity to get our wings back. Every child is free to invent his/her own movement to fly and after that, we can create the flower where our friend, the butterfly, will rest upon and fall asleep. The teacher will always lead the activity, although, at the same time, she must let children make their own suggestions and proposals.



4. We can fly together. One of the children plays the role of Pombouria and moves as she flies around the flower. Before resting upon the flower, he/she chooses a friend to play it together. When the song ends, they will choose on their turn another friend each, until the whole group becomes Pombouria and all children experience their way of flying. At the end, we all build the form of the flower to conclude the activity. Afterwards, we can introduce the recorded music as well for a further development.
5. What happened then? We can comment on our trip with Pombouria, which is such a magical animal bringing luck to us by donating her wings. The teacher will leave children free to express their impressions, reflections, emotions and opinions on the activity. With the teacher's help, children will be able to draw their own Pombouria, their own flower and any other element suggested by the musical experience they lived.

### Suggestions

1. *Al pasar de la barca*: if your class is composed of many children, this activity can be developed by splitting them into two groups to form a single big boat: one will play the role of the boat and the other one will pretend to be the sails blown by the wind.
2. From the musical point of view, it is possible to use the refrain of *I trata mas* as the ostinato accompanying the melody of *Al pasar la barca*.

### *Expected outcome*

- Consolidate what children learned in the previous lessons
- Creation of a final event merging all aspects and musical elements that were put into practice in the previous lessons.

### *Evidence of learning*

The level of participation and involvement in the activity by means of rhythmic and melodic correct and consistent interventions confirms that children learnt the musical material indeed. The quality of movement, children's choices and proposals as well as their direct and indirect interventions also confirm that they understood and internalized the material on its whole.

## **Lesson Plan 4: The butterfly fled on the top of an ancient castle... From Sant Antoni to Bel Castello (travelling from Spain to Italy)**

*We start using a traditional repertoire that children already know with the aim of learning to respect and appreciate our origins. Familiar songs are the link to the Italian song "Oh, che bel castello!" which promotes respect for the others' origins through music. By merging these two repertoires, we can perform a dance and use some already known elements. We aim at making this path a "live" experience, in a process of constant evolution.*

### *Musical goals*

Children are expected to:

1. Work and recognize the A-B structure
2. Work and recognize contrasting elements in music: slow/fast – accelerando/ritardando – piano/forte – sound/silence.
3. Work on emotions and feelings in music (musically express fatigue, sadness, happiness through sounds...)
4. Sing the song in its original language.
5. Practice active listening with an ostinato by playing musical instruments and lifting the lycra.
6. Develop skills in the execution of binary and ternary meters
7. Develop creativity in terms of sharing children's ideas about rhythmic patterns, new ostinato, movements, and verbal proposals.
8. Practice free movement in space by following an A-B structure.

### *Description of lesson plan, processes and strategies*

1. We are attending the festival of Sant Antoni in Mallorca, where the most representative element is fire. By singing a melody that children already know (in two sections: A and B), we build a bonfire. There are scattered sticks on the floor. Part A: Free movement in space by collecting wood. Part B: we all gather together and light the fire by rubbing sticks and blowing on them. Finally the fire appears: red, orange and yellow scarves represent it.
2. We all sit around the bonfire, we talk about its meaning, the festivity of Sant Antoni, demons and feelings associated with it, together with children. We sing *Tonada de Sant Antoni*<sup>1</sup> (traditional song) and we play a game in which a child is the demon (he plays a cowbell) and another child is Sant Antoni. The demon goes after Sant Antoni, until he sits down in the circle, then he gives the

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<sup>1</sup> You can play the same game with a song that your children already know.

cowbell to another child. Give the opportunity to the other children to practice the downbeat in triple meter with body percussion.

3. Discuss with children on the existence of the same game (with different music material) in many different Mediterranean countries.
4. Show children traditional instruments that are played during festivals, such as *ximbombas*, *castanets*, tambourines... Offer them the opportunity to play these instruments.
5. Since Sant Antoni is well known to like the sea, we sail on a trip around the Mediterranean on a paper boat and the blue lycra. We start singing a rhythmic ostinato in binary meter (du du-de du du-de) accompanying it with lateral movement of the lycra. By keeping the movement, sing *De sa coa des moixet* (a traditional song from Mallorca), in double meter (but you can also choose a song with the same meter from your traditional repertoire) and at the end of every verse, lift the lycra as a wave.
6. At the end of the song, invite children to continue the ostinato. Sant Antoni hears something in the distance. Sing *Oh, che bel castello!* over the rhythmic ostinato kept by children. Talk with children about what they may have heard. Can they understand the meaning of the song? What language is it? In which country has Sant Antoni arrived? Talk about Italy.

### Suggestions

1. After having experienced the musical structure A-B with the mimetic game, you can physically see the structure using the following circles of different colours and give them the opportunity to make their own compositions, eg A-B-A-A-B (like in the example below). You can also use simple and effective music with A-B structure and propose different actions (body percussion, movements, rhythmic and melodic patterns, Orff instruments... always playing with contrasts).



2. The demon is a character that often generates fear among children. By making children play his role, we can help them manage their fear and talk about their emotions (What do I do when I am scared of something? Can I do something different?)
3. You can make a simple *ximbomba* with children by using a plastic cup, a plastic pin and a straw and by just clicking the pin at the base of the cup, burning the head of it and putting the straw that will stick to it. With wet hands (like the real *ximbomba*) children will be able to play the instrument.



4. You can listen to recorded traditional music, while children build their instruments or even invite a professional musician to show them.
5. Show a map of the Mediterranean and draw the supposed boat trip on it, so that children will better understand that they are between the two countries.
6. By using a common musical element between the Spanish and Italian songs, you can discuss with children about the concepts of “same” and “different” and put it into practice in some activities.
7. By using the lycra and a paper boat, you can play a game in which the boat must travel from one point to another one. All children should work together and look for a common movement, so that the waves can help the boat move towards the destination that they want to reach.
8. When your journey to Italy is coming to an end, you can use different musical parameters (loose singing to indicate that music is heard in the distance; *in crescendo* when you are approaching; strong when you arrive; slow, fast, or you can even play with feelings: tired, surprised, etc...)

#### *Expected outcome*

- Learn how to recognize a musical structure A-B by performing contrasting movements.
- Develop curiosity and interest for our origins and those of other countries.
- Use the musical material as a channel to express, recognize and manage our emotions.
- Develop teamwork.
- Visualize the verses of a song.
- Get familiar with the language of another country.

#### *Evidence of learning*

- Active participation in the process of mimesis.
- Share knowledge and emotions.
- Body's coordination on the ostinato.
- Execution of the steady beat.

### **Lesson Plan 5: The looting of the castle**

#### *Musical goals*

Children are expected to:

1. Sing the Italian song in its original language (in our case, the proximity between Catalan and Italian facilitates learning the Italian words).
2. Sing melodic patterns in the tonal context of the song.
3. Practice questions and answers in the context of tonality and understanding of musical ideas through imitation.
4. Practice rhythmic patterns in binary meter.
5. Coordinate body movements with singing
6. Follow movement by playing instruments.

#### *Description of lesson plan, processes and strategies*

1. Sing the melody of *O che bel castello* and suggest children to clap hands for two beats when it says *marcondirondirondello-marcondirondirà*, as you introduced the song in the previous lesson with a rhythmic ostinato: *du du-de*. In this lesson, you can suggest to stay silent for two bars and to make two claps in the first beat of bar 3-4, instead; then silence again for two bars and two claps in the first beat of bar 7-8, as a preparatory work for body percussion in a rondó form

(for example: bars 1-2: beat your legs, bars 3-4: clap your hands, bars 5-6: snap fingers, bars 7-8: clap hands). In the first beat of each bar, try to give children the opportunity to choose their own 'rondò' music actions.

2. Talk with children about the meaning of the song and propose them to make some movements or gestures representing what the song is about, by keeping two claps on *marcondirondirondello-marcondirondirondà* (usually they will make gestures that mark the macrobeat or microbeat of the song). Choose together what they like best as well as the most appropriate actions and movements they want to propose. Then, tell them we are now castle knights and bandits who want to loot the castle. Split the class into two groups; place one in front of the other, representing bandits and knights and work on the practice of antiphonal music, which means singing in alternate turns. It could be very useful for children to understand and remember lyrics from the previous session, so we can work on the text from the four first verses (until 'E noi lo rifaremo') before talking about the tower and making the melodic patterns for building it. After the tower, we pretend to be all bandits.
3. Tell children that some bandits looted the tower of the castle and the knights rebuilt it and practice melodic patterns in the tonal context of the song, by ascending to make the tower, and descending to demolish it (stressing the dominant when it is up, and the tonic when it falls down). Use alternate hand movements to go up and down and move the body up and down for melodic patterns. You can also use wooden blocks to visualize and recreate the tower.
4. Play a game. In the song, the bandits always take a stone off the castle when they pronounce a kid's name, so at the end of the game, we are all bandits and we are satisfied with our job, and eventually, we all go to the tavern to drink and celebrate!
5. Sing the melody of *Ball de Sant Ferriol* and provide each child with some coloured shapes. In part A, we are bandits that dance cheerfully and in part B we stand on the shape and try not to fall as if we were drunk (jump in and out, touch your nose with alternate hands, jump with alternate feet...)
6. Split the class into two groups: one in front of the other, put the recorded music on and prepare the dance with a partner. Decide which group will play the captain. In part A we turn around ourselves and in part B the captain suggests a movement and his partner imitates.

### *Suggestions*

1. You can do a clapping game with *O che bel castello*, by introducing each time small variations, suggested by children on *marcondirondirondello-marcondirondirondà* (hand to hand with a peer, clap with other body parts...). Also movement games, such as jumping like an animal or play Orff instruments.
2. At the beginning, it can usually happen that children do not wait for their turn during the practice of antiphonal music. You can help them singing, playing or listening to echo music working with movements they must look first and then imitate in the echo parts. It is important to encourage children to make their own proposals.
3. After practicing melodic patterns, you can play a game to work on questions-answers in the context of tonality with coloured shapes and bells to reinforce the tonal centre and visualize it (f# d e f# / f# l f# f# , f# d e f# / f# a f# r):



8. In previous lessons, before dancing *Ball de Sant Ferriol*, try to practice rhythmic patterns in binary meter, by chanting, for example, section B. It will be easier for children to improvise movements in this section.

*Expected outcome*

- Get familiar with the language of another country.
- Develop skills to move body parts alternatively to singing (sound / silence).
- Develop intonation and tonal center.
- Develop the ability to work in couples.
- Recognize musical structures.
- Develop creativity and self-initiative in proposing ideas.
- Learn a legend and a folk dance.

*Evidence of learning*

- Ability to pronounce words in another language.
- Body's coordination.
- Ability to sing the tonal centre and repeat melodic patterns.
- Execution of the steady beat with body movement, body percussion or instruments.
- Show interest in the creative process and share ideas.

*Final expected outcome, evidence and sharing*

Children produced a lot of drawings. A video was realized and photos, too.

Children performed a holistic event to share with parents their work and feeling.