



Lesson – *De Colores: A Traditional Spanish Folk Song*

Companion Video – *De Colores*

Suggested Grade Level

Grades 1-6

Objective

Students will learn the traditional folk song *De Colores*. The Spanish lyrics will give non-Spanish speakers the opportunity to sing in another language. Instrumental students can learn the parts and play along with the BPO video recording. Students will understand the importance of folk songs in preserving and passing on cultural stories, values and traditions.

Suggested Materials

- Video of *De Colores* performed by the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra and vocalist Alejandro Gómez
- Lyrics and music for *De Colores* (provided)
- Optional: Music parts for instrumental students (provided)

New York State Arts Standards

MU:Pr4.2.1a-6a

MU:Pr4.2.1b-6b

MU:Pr4.2.3c-6c

MU:Pr6.1.1a-6a

MU:Cn11.1.1a-6a

New York State English Language Arts & Literacy Standards

Reading, Standard 1 & 4

Speaking & Listening, Standard 1, 2, 4 & 6

Language, Standard 1, 3, 4, 5 & 6

New York State Languages Other Than English Standards

Standard 1: Communication Skills

Standard 2: Cultural Understanding



Lesson – *De Colores: A Mexican Folk Song (continued)*

Procedure

- 1) Introduce the song *De Colores* with some background information about its origins: *De Colores* is a well-known Spanish folk song that means “Of Colors.” The lyrics are an expression of happiness and celebration that our world is full of so many colors.
- 2) Briefly discuss with students: What is a folk song and why are they important? Some points to include:
 - a) Folk songs are passed down from one generation to the next, usually without any sort of notation. This is called an “oral tradition,” meaning that we pass something along by saying or telling it, or in this case, singing it. Often times, there are no written records of the original versions of folk songs or folk tales.
 - b) If you have ever played a game of “gossip,” you understand how things change as they get passed along without being written down. Many folk songs we sing today have nonsense words in them or they seem very silly. This could be because words were changed along the way because people misunderstood what they heard.
 - c) Many folk songs have been around for a long time and no one is sure who originally composed them.
- 3) Using the lyrics, music and recording as needed, teach the students the song, *De Colores*. Depending on your available time, you may want to just focus on the chorus:

Y por eso los grandes amores
de muchos colores me gustan a mi.
Y por eso los grandes amores
de muchos colores me gustan a mi.

And this love, this great love
of all the colors, is very special to me.
And this love, this great love
of all the colors, is very special to me.

Then, if you have time you can teach them the first verse:

De colores, de colores
Se visten los campos en la primavera.

All the colors, all the colors
How they all bloom in the
field in springtime.

De colores, de colores
Son los pajaritos que vienen de afuera.
De colores, de colores
Es el arco iris que vemos lucir.

All the colors, all the colors
On the little birds as they come from afar.
All the colors, all the colors
We see in the rainbows that shine in the sky.

In the BPO recording, our host singer will sing the first verse and chorus, sung in Spanish and then in English. Sing along with the BPO!

If time permits and you would like to, you may add a singing of the second verse in your classroom (this will not be included in the BPO video):



Lesson – *De Colores: A Mexican Folk Song* (continued)

Verse 2:

Canta el gallo, canta el gallo	Oh, the rooster, oh, the rooster,
con el quiri quiri quiri quiri quiri	he sings cock-a – doodle, doodle, doodle-do
La gallina, la gallina	Oh, the hen, oh the hen,
con el cara cara cara cara cara	she sings cluck-cluck-cluck, cluck- cluck-cluck, cluck
Los polluelos, los polluelos	Oh, the chicks, oh the baby chicks,
con el pío pío pío pío pío pí	they sing cheep-cheep-cheep-cheep-cheep-cheep

- 4) This song celebrates the idea that the more colors we see, the richer and brighter our world is. The variety of colors that we see around us brightens our view just as the variety of musical sounds in the orchestra enhances our listening experience and the variety of people in our neighborhoods enriches our community. Ask students to describe at least one thing that makes their world more beautiful.

Instrumental Lesson Extension

Beginning instrumentalists have the opportunity to learn the instrumental part for *De Colores* and play along with the BPO recording or play together with each other. Find all parts on the BPO Music for Youth Hub for downloading.

