

Teacher Resource Pack
The Bush Concert



Adelaide Symphony Orchestra
Learning Program

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Helga Visser, Illustrator & Author

Message to Audience

I was delighted to hear that my book would be presented as a musical production, for an audience of Adelaide school children.

I hear that Mark Simeon Ferguson, who has composed the music, is going to include the birdcalls of some of the birds featured in the book.

You might recognize them.

It was actually birdcalls that inspired this book.

It had been raining for a number of days, it was cold and dreary, and my bird friends were sitting outside looking wet and miserable.

Then they started singing, first only a few notes and then finally they all joined in.

They thoroughly enjoyed their singing, and so cheered themselves up.

So there's the idea of the story – when things are looking down, look up, cheer up . . . sing a song, dance or crack a joke. It will make you feel better.

I hope you enjoy the show.

With thanks to presenter, Susan Ferguson and the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra musicians.

Helga Visser

Mark Simeon Ferguson, Composer

Message to Audience

When I first opened Helga Visser's wonderful book *The Bush Concert* I knew immediately that I was going to base a lot of the music on the calls of the birds featured in the book. Composers often use birdcalls in their music—Olivier Messiaen and Peter Sculthorpe are both quite famous for doing this—so it seemed a logical starting point. I then spent the next few months researching and transcribing (notating) the melodies and rhythms featured in these birdcalls. Next I went through the material looking for themes or 'hooks' that I liked and tried to simplify many of these ideas to make them playable (have you noticed how fast some birds calls are? Our ASO players are amazing but some of these birds are astonishing). Meanwhile I was also developing supporting music and additional themes that I felt would best represent each scene.

Before writing the 'songs' I asked myself "what stories would a bird be interested in?" For 'The Misguided Magpie-lark' I had already written the music so I had to write words to fit with my piece while I wrote the words and music for "Gum Tree Song" at the same time. It usually takes me a couple of hours to write a song, but I will come back to it for the next week and fix things I wasn't happy with. However I spend days and weeks researching my topics before I write any words so I have plenty of material in my mind to write about and so I don't make too many factual errors (other than the intentional ones)

I hope you enjoy working through *The Bush Concert* and get inspired to listen to the birds around you; they truly create some of the best music around.

Mark Simeon Ferguson

Overview

The Story

A tale about community, adversity and inclusion – The Bush Concert is the story of the Australian bush and its harsh conditions. The bird community is in distress as they struggle to find water and food during drought, and come together to hold a big concert to lift everyone’s spirits – The Bush Concert!

Based on Australian author Helga Visser’s beautiful book of the same name, this special concert experience engages students through song, dance, and the beautiful images from the book. Mark Simeon Ferguson’s score is a wonderful introduction to the sounds of our Australian birds, and an enchanting introduction to the instruments of the orchestra.

The Instruments

During this performance eight ASO musicians and a presenter come together to re-tell this beautiful story. Instruments that will be included represent each of the musical families. They are:

- Woodwinds:
 - Flute/piccolo
 - Clarinet
 - Bassoon
- Brass
 - Trombone
- Strings
 - Violins (x2)
 - Viola
 - Cello
- Percussion
 - Vibraphone
 - Snare Drum
 - Rain Stick
 - Temple Block
 - Cajon
 - Maracas
 - Triangle

The Teacher Resource Kit

In preparation for this performance it is important to familiarise your students with the story of The Bush Concert, its pictures, and the music (tracks). Each track was written for each illustration/page of the story book. This kit will provide teachers with the activities and resources associated with certain tracks. These will be vital in ensuring your students have the fullest experience possible during the performance. Further suggested activities can be found via this Dropbox link: [The Bush Concert](#).

Track #1 – It Hadn't Rained

ACTIVITY: Create/Compose a Soundscape (Optional)

1. Discuss the sorts of sounds that would go with this picture
 - Birdcalls, wind in the trees, dry, clicking, crunching sounds
2. Explore making sounds from the gathered bush foliage
 - Sounds can include:
 - Scratching, shaking, tapping, scraping
 - Or use other found sounds such as:
 - Vocal sounds, body percussion or instruments.
3. Divide sounds into similar sound groups and decide how to put the sounds together.
 - Use graphic notation to notate the arrangement.
 - Consider tempo (speed), dynamics (loud/quiet), form (structure) etc.
 - Practise the piece.
 - Record the performance.
 - Listen and encourage student responses to the piece.
4. Extension
 - For older classes, divide into small groups and create new pieces following the above procedure.
 - Record or video the compositions, listen/view and discuss. Do they suit the picture?
 - Discuss and select one or two pieces to play at a school event or similar

ACTIVITY: Identifying Birds & Birdcalls (Optional)

1. Listen to what the composer, Mark Simeon Ferguson, wrote for this illustration.
 - When he composed this piece he used the calls from most of the bird in the illustration.
 - Ask students to listen for which birdcalls he used.
 - Try and identify the order of the birdcalls:
 - Raven, Wood Duck, Wonga Pigeon, Magpie, and Superb Fairy Wren.
2. Introduce Listening Map #1A (Optional)
Intro and A Section (please see page 8 for Listening Map #1A)
 - Discuss the map and how to read it.
 - Listen to the first part of the track #1 while following Listening Map #1A.
 - Ask students if they can identify the instruments used to play the birdcalls.
3. Introduce Listening Map #1B
Page 1 of Listening Map #1B shows which instruments are playing (please see page 9 for Listening Map #1B)
 - Discuss what instruments are playing which birdcalls.
 - Trombone - Raven
 - Bassoon - Australian Wood Duck
 - Clarinet - Wonga Pigeon

- Bassoon - Magpie
 - Piccolo - Superb Fairy Wren
 - Listen to the A Section only, following page 1 of Listening Map #1B.
 - Introduce the Bridge and B section
 - Discuss Page 2 of Listening Map #1B - what they might expect to hear?
 - Play the Bridge and B section, following the Listening Map #1B
 - Vibraphone plays repetitive pattern four times, cello plays the melody while woodwinds and brass join in with bird calls.
4. Listen to the whole piece
- Follow along with Listening Map #1B.

"It Hadn't Rained For a Very Long Time"

Listening Map #1A - A Section only

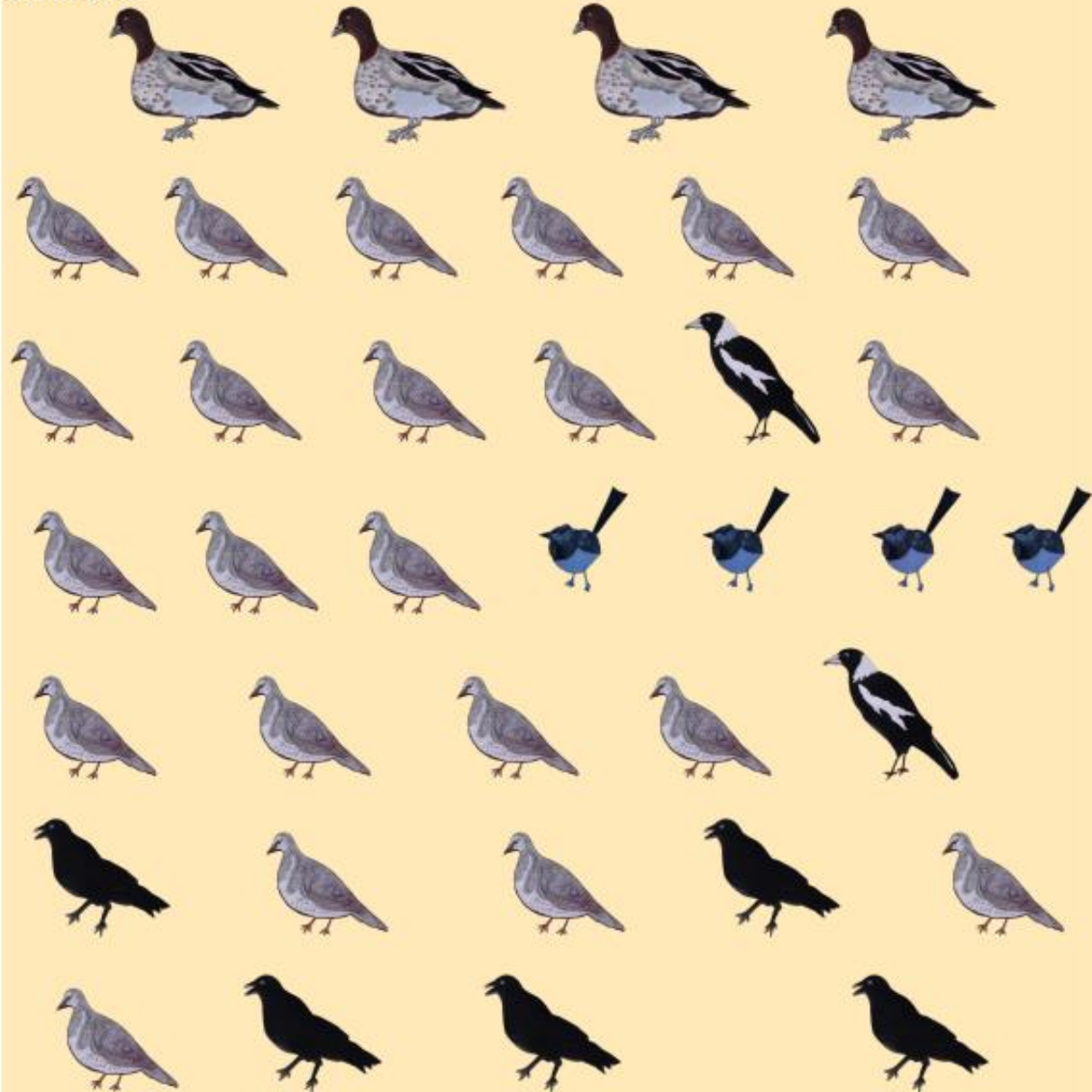
Music composed by Mark Simeon Ferguson - Listening Map - M McGowan-Jackson

Each bird image approximates a birdcall in the piece:

Intro:



A Section:



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"It Hadn't Rained For a Very Long Time" Listening Map #1B

Music composed by Mark Simeon Ferguson Listening Map - M McGowan-Jackson

Introduction:



A Section:



Bridge:



B Section: Vibraphone plays a melodic ostinato, the cello plays the melody with birdcalls played by the woodwind and trombone.



'Cello



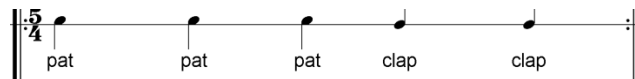
Cello



Track #3 - Performers Wanted

ACTIVITY: Body Percussion & Imitation

1. Introduce 5/4 patterns using body percussion and simultaneous imitation
 - While playing Track #3, start playing the pattern below and ask students to join in with you.



Make the patterns 3 + 2

- Explore lots of different patterns including some bird type arm movements and some of the moves below, always using the 3-+2 sequence.
2. Exploring new body percussion patterns
 - In pairs, students create new body percussion patterns in 5/4 (3 + 2 sequence)
 - Share with class, (half perform, half watch) and then swap

Track #4 - Hullabaloo

ACTIVITY: Making Bird Movements

1. Explore and practice making bird shapes and holding them for 8 beats each. Consider levels, width etc.
 - Have half class perform while the others watch, then swap over.
 - For ideas from First Nations dance, please refer to the clip below:
 - Brolga Dance from Arnhem land.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFvJxbb4iwg>

ACTIVITY: The Brush Turkey

1. Discuss the male Brush Turkey's habit of kicking leaves to make a large mound into which the female Brush Turkey lays her eggs. The male looks after the mound of leaves to keep the eggs at the right temperature so they will hatch. He sometimes has to remove some leaves to make it cooler or put more on to make it warmer. He spends a lot of time kicking leaves!
(Optional) For more information on the Brush Turkey:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-B2gcvFWyc> (the beginning of this video provides some good footage of the brush turkey kicking leaves).

2. (Optional) Teach the Brush Turkey Rhythm 

3. (Optional) Listen for the Brush Turkey Theme
 - Listen to the very beginning bars a few times, and slowly get students to chant along with the bassoon playing the Brush Turkey theme so they become familiar with it.
 - Listen further into the piece listening for the Brush Turkey Theme - we hear it twice at the start, then after the clarinet plays a little tune, the Brush Turkey theme is heard three more time along with all the other birds making a hullabaloo!
4. Teach the Brush Turkey Dance Sequence (see page 13 for Dance Map)
 - Discuss / review safe dance practices:
 - Finding own space, creating an imaginary bubble, moving without touching anyone.
 - Warm students up using a range of activities:
 - Stretching, balance and control, increasing heart rate, loosening limbs and joints. Express these in terms of bird movements during warm up instructions. ("Stretching up like an emu trying to pick

fruit from high up in a tree", "balancing like a flamingo on one leg") etc.

- Teach "Brush Turkey step"
 - On the spot and with hands clasped behind, drag one foot and lift back behind then place foot on the ground, then the same with the other foot. Keep alternating feet.)
- Teach the Brush Turkey Dance Sequence (This can be done in their own space, a circle or two long lines):

THE BRUSH TURKEY DANCE SEQUENCE

8 Brush Turkey steps on the spot (alternating feet, hands behind) with bassoon (16 beats)

Elbow wings, 4 steps forward 4 steps back (repeat) with clarinet. (16 beats)

Return to Brush Turkey Steps with the Brush Turkey theme, doing steps in a little circle

Ruffle feathers with the loud drums (4 beats only)

Bush dance sequence: Elbow wings, 4 steps Right, 4 steps Left, hands making bird beak and tail feathers, 8 steps around in own circle (repeat)

Extend arms like wings, 4 beats up, 4 beats down (repeat) with clarinet tune.

Bush dance sequence: Elbow wings, 4 steps Right, 4 steps Left, hands making bird beak and tail feathers, 8 steps around in own circle (repeat)

Bird Shapes held for 8 beats (8 different shapes or 2 shapes use 4 times each) while instruments play clever tricks.

Bush dance sequence: Elbow wings, 4 steps Right, 4 steps Left, hands making bird beak and tail feathers, 8 steps around in own circle (repeat).

Separate action sheet found on next page (p.13)

- Once taught, practice through a few times with the music so students become familiar with the music and the form.
- Video the performance for student viewing and response and for teacher evaluation purposes.

HULLABALOO – BIRD BUSH DANCE SEQUENCE

Music composed by Mark Simeon Ferguson

1. 8 Brush Turkey steps on the spot



Bassoon melody - "The Brush Turkey, he's kicking leaves"(x2)

2. Long neck arm and elbow wing 4 steps forward, 4 steps back (x2)

Trombone plays the Pied Heron call

3. 14 Brush Turkey steps in turning in a circle



Bassoon melody - "The Brush Turkey, he's kicking leaves"(x3 - and a bit!)

4. Ruffle of feathers - 4 beats with the drum

5. Bird Bush dance: x2

Elbow wings, 4 steps right, 4 steps left,

Beak and tail feathers, 8 steps in a small circle

6. Flying wings with the clarinet melody

Arms beating up for 4 beats, arms beating down for 4 beats (x2)

7. Bird Bush dance: x2

Elbow wings, 4 steps right, 4 steps left,

Beak and tail feathers, 8 steps in a small circle

8. 8 Bird poses held for 8 beats



9. Bird Bush dance: x2 and until the music stops!

Elbow wings, 4 steps right, 4 steps left,

Beak and tail feathers, 8 steps in a small circle

Track #5 – Concert Night

ACTIVITY: Create a bird head piece!

1. Discuss the illustration
 - Count how many birds there are.
 - Try and identify some of the birds. Mark has used many of the calls of the birds in this illustration including; Spinefex Pigeon, Little Lorikeet, Great Crested Grebe, Black Swan, Wompoo Pigeon, Superb Fruit Dove, Silvereye, red-whiskered Bulbul and the Magpie Lark.
 - What is special about how they look in this picture?

2. Create a bird head piece to wear to the concert
 - You'll need a cardboard shape to fit across the forehead, feathers, glue and frieze tape to attach to each side to fit around the head.
 - "Feathers for Phoebe" by Rod Clements, Angus and Robertson 2010, is a delightful picture book about being yourself and has some amazing ideas for feather "accessories" for birds!
 - Please see pictures below of a bird headpiece for reference:



Track #11 – Gum Tree Song

ACTIVITY: Teach the Gum Tree Song (see page 17 for Actions Map)

1. Listen to the song & discuss:
 - The verse and chorus form
 - Talk about the chorus staying the same, but the verse has different words.
 - Discuss what happens at the end of the song (it gets faster!)
 - Discuss the meaning of the words

EUCALYPTUS TREE (GUM TREE) SONG
Words & Music by Mark Ferguson

Verse 1:

Some birds fly north for winter, traverse the open seas
on paths eternal, winds and thermals, back to where they breed.
But something calls them homeward, to great South land they flee.
What brings them back, such a lengthy track?
Is it the scent of the eucalyptus tree?

Chorus:

They love the Red gum, Blue gum,
Grey gum, Ghost gum
Scribbly gum, Spotted gum,
even Lemon Scented gum.
Stringy bark, Paper bark,
Iron bark, Half bark.
Even when it's fallen they still love it as a log!
Red gum, Blue gum,
Grey gum, Ghost gum
Scribbly gum, Spotted gum,
Seven Flowered Mountain gum.
Stringy bark, Paper bark,
Iron bark, Half bark.
Any type of bark, just not the bark of a dog! Ruff!

Verse 2:

Some birds they like to whistle with pitch so clear and true,
While others squawk, that's how they talk, and others like to coo.
But nothing's quite so Aussie, nothing so true blue
No thing's near half of the Kookaburra's laugh
from a gum tree next to you.

Chorus

Repeat Chorus - getting faster and faster!!

2. Introduce the words and actions of the chorus
 - Explain how the presenter will sing the verse and the students sing the chorus (demonstrate this by teacher singing verse and students singing chorus when learning words)
 - Slowly teach the words and actions. (see the action chart on following page, p. 17).
3. Continue to practise the song ready to join in at the performance!

ACTIONS FOR GUM TREE SONG

These actions are drawn for the teacher to follow and students to mirror.

The "hands on heart" is drawn on the right so students hands will be on the left.



even Lemon Scented gum.



Red gum, Blue gum,
Grey gum, Ghost gum
Scribbly gum, Spotted gum,



Seven Flowered Mountain gum.

Stringy bark, Paper bark,
Iron bark, Half bark.



Any type of bark, just not the bark of a dog! (woof).

Track #12 – Fan Dances

ACTIVITY: Spanish Dancing

1. Discuss the illustration and identify the Spanish connection
 - Discuss Spanish Flamenco style music, (guitars, dancing, stamping, fast foot sounds, clapping and using fans).
2. Introduce/Practice mirroring activities
(*The Presenter will lead some arm movement mirroring during this piece for the performance*)
 - Students follow teacher, establishing the mirroring process, then students practice in pairs, moving SLOWLY!
 - Lead students through some Flamenco style hand movements and hand positions during the mirroring process.
 - *For your own information, these clips may be useful.*
 - Dance arm movements
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVNB1arZajs>
 - Flower hands
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=np0IBfeU0jM>

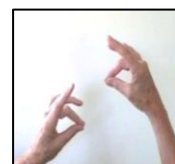
3. Clapping exercises
 - Explore different ways to clap.
 - Clapping plays a very important part in Flamenco music. It's called Palma.
 - Practice the following pattern, students will perform this in the concert.



- Teach students the cupped hand clap
 - imagine you are holding in your hands and then clap
 - *This is a very short example of the two basic Flamenco handclaps*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yo38h7Wdc88>
- Practice the above pattern again with the cupped hand clap



4. Teach the "castanet fingers" pattern
 - Discuss castanets and their part in Flamenco music. They may originally have been shells.
 - This part follows the clapping section in the piece and involves playing the same pattern but pretending to play castanets. ("castanet fingers")



5. Introduce the Flamenco Dance poses
 - During the "battle" between the Clarinet and Trombone, students will take male flamenco dancer/toreador style poses, changing each time the instruments change. (See Listening Map on page 20). The presenter will lead this at the performance.

6. Introduce Flamenco dance steps, Stamp, Planta and heel
 - We will use the 'Stamp' with the clapping pattern and during the dance we will use the 'ball of the foot step' ('Planta') and the 'heel'.
 - Video link below with the basic Spanish dance steps - (stamp, planta ball of foot, heel) Quite a long video, but does carefully show the three steps.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBOP-NFGL0E>
 - Practise the Stamp on beat 1, alternating feet
 - Try adding the cupped hand clapping pattern at the same time
 - Practise Planta (stepping with the ball of the RH foot on beat 1), and placing the heel of that foot down on beat 2, then the same with the other foot on beats 3 and 4.
 - (For Receptions or similar simplify to just the Planta or Stamp on beat 1).

7. Introduce the structure of the piece
 - Using the Listening Map (see next page, p.20), talk through the various sections and what the students will be doing in each
 - Do they have a favourite section? Why do they like that part in particular? Turn and share with a partner. Share some responses with the class.
 - Play Track # 12 and listen while following the Listening Map/Sections.
 - Listen again adding the mirroring actions (teacher leading) Section A, and the hand claps Section B.
 - Add the "castanet fingers" Section C and mime playing the clarinet and trombone during the battle, Section D.

8. Teach the dance sequence

Refer to Movement Guide on page 21 for steps

 - Remember to use the Planta and heel pattern with the feet throughout
 - Practice the dance steps with the music

9. Try performing the whole sequence with the music. (Use the Listening Map as a guide)

#12 FAN DANCERS

Composed by Mark Simeon Ferguson

INTRODUCTION - Listening 6 bars



A - 12 bars Mirroring

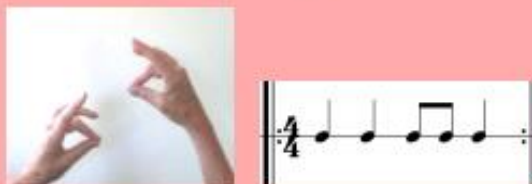


BRIDGE: 4 bars Stand and clap

B : 8 bars Clapping pattern and stamping first beat



C: 9 bars Castanet Fingers and stamping first beat



D: 10 bars THE BATTLE - Mime playing the clarinet and trombone



BRIDGE : 2 bars Get ready for the dance

A: 8 bars The Dance - 8 arm movements with ball of the foot and heel steps.



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FAN DANCERS - Movement Guide

INTRO: 6 bars - listening

A SECTION: 12 bars

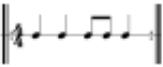
Mirroring Spanish hand moves

Clarinet -4 bars, Trombone -4 bars, Clarinet then trombone then Ensemble-4 bars

Bridge - 4 bars

Stand and prepare to clap pattern and stamp on beat 1

B SECTION: 8 bar

Cupped clap stamping on beat 1 

C SECTION: 9 bars

Castanet fingers make the pattern above, stamping on Beat 1

D SECTION: 10 bars

Mime playing the clarinet and trombone, changing as instruments change in the "battle" between clarinet and trombone

Bridge: 2 bars

Preparation for dance

A SECTION: return of themes from A section - 8 bars -

Spanish style dance

Planta - ball of foot stamp (then lower heel)

4 beats per pose

1. Arms right up left down
2. Swap arms
3. 2 hands right hip elbows pointed
4. 2 hands left hip elbows pointed
5. Twirling hands one way
6. Twirling hands other way
7. Both hands behind back looking right
8. Both hands behind back looking Left
9. Freeze in final pose - move to floor to create thunder rumble

For your information, some video clips about Flamenco dancing

Flower hands <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=np0IBfeU0jM>

Hand and arm combinations <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8W6BZI8CcfA>

Heel strike sounds <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sfekLNGB6LM>

Dance hand patterns <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=obhBepDCKXU>

Dance foot rhythms <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WF0abVcSedc>

Dance hand movements <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tezLELPiQgo>

Using castanets in dance https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pKZoF9ce_uM

Dance arm movements <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-BUCeG1IbFU>

Basic Footwork <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OW1Bcy5khiw>

Utopia Flamenco performance - modern interpretation of Flamenco (75 minute concert)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sNgV_CaATdI

Track #15 – Reprise Hullabaloo

ACTIVITY: Learn the Hullabaloo Song

1. Listen to the piece
 - Ask students if it sounds familiar? (Hullabaloo # 4).
 - What is different? (It has lyrics).
 - Listen again, this time listening to the words. What are they? What are they about?
2. Teach the song through echo imitation



3. Listen to how many times the song is sung
 - 4 times, then 8 bars of instrumental, followed by the song twice more.
4. Students practise singing with the vocal part and dancing (freestyle) in the instrumental section in between the song.

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