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Nashville, TN 37209

Comparing Similar Japanese and English Songs

Level/Class

This lesson is designed for a standard first grade class during their weekly music hour. It can also be taught to classes that contain Lifeskills students at the first grade level.

Objectives/Standards

Students will learn a Japanese song and will then compare it to an English language song they already know. This lesson may be used to partially satisfy the district music standard regarding exposure to the music of diverse world cultures.

Time

This lesson can be taught within one 60-minute weekly music class period with follow-ups in subsequent weeks.

Materials needed

Recording of “Kuma San” song
1st Grade Share the Music teacher’s edition
CD Player
World map

Assessment

Students will be informally assessed based on their participation and singing of the song during class. Optional formal assessment on the comparison of the two songs may occur on the next unit exam.

Lesson Procedure

1. After standard musical greeting and roll call, I will review the previously learned song “Teddy Bear” with the class.
2. Without comment, I will play a CD recording of the Japanese song “Kuma San,” instructing the students to listen only. I will then ask the students if they can guess where the music comes from and will lead the discussion until they decide the song is from Japan.
3. I will point out Japan on the world map and its location in relation to that of the United States.
4. I will ask if any students can tell me anything they already know about Japan.
5. I will then teach the students the song “Kuma San” by having them repeat one line at a time after I sing it.
6. Students will then be informed that the song they just learned is the Japanese equivalent of the song “Teddy Bear” that they already know.

7. The students will perform the motions that are associated with the Japanese song and game (turn around, touch the ground, jump with one foot in the air, wave goodbye).
8. We will then sing and play the games associated with both the English and Japanese versions of the song in order to introduce a discussion on the similarities and differences of the two versions of the song.

Resources

Bond, J. Share the Music. New York: MacMillan/McGraw-Hill School Publishing. 1995.