



Latino Children's Folk Music: A Series of Thematic Writing Exercises

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Introduction

I teach pre-Kindergarten through fifth grade at a suburban elementary school in the Richmond City Public School district in Richmond, Virginia. My unit, designed to cover six weeks, is written for fifth graders and focuses on the Mexican folk song "Bate, Bate Chocolate" ("Stir, Stir the Chocolate") as the springboard for three writing exercises. In my district, writing is a state-tested objective for fifth grade students. Students nationwide often approach writing with a sense of dread. My curriculum unit makes writing fun by utilizing a song with an appealing name and theme — chocolate.

As the general Latino population grows throughout the United States, the Mexican immigrant population stands out as having one of the largest impacts on our nation's schools in terms of enrollment. This school growth has heightened an awareness of a rich culture that already exists as a part of the culture of the United States. Like the population of other school districts across the country, the Richmond City Public School district shows increasing numbers of Latino students every year. During the 2003-2004 school year, 2.66% of students in Richmond Public Schools were Hispanic. That ratio increased to 2.93% during the 2004-2005 school year. (1) A large percentage of this Hispanic population is Mexican. The average enrollment at my school during the 2006-2007 school year was 451, with 7.2% Hispanic, 84.6% Black, 6.5% White, 1.2% Asian, and .5% Unspecified. As the population of Hispanics increases, specifically Mexican immigrants, so does the interest in Mexican culture and customs. Due to a general student interest in learning more about Mexican culture and the need to spark excitement for writing, I have selected the Mexican folk song "Bate, Bate Chocolate" as the core of my curriculum unit.

Music is closely connected to the four core subject areas of Mathematics, History, Science, and Language Arts (which can include English, Reading, Writing and Literature). As it relates to mathematics, music is a complex numerical language of notes and meters. Any historian will tell you that music connects with a myriad of events in history, and it has its own history in the lives of countless composers and in different styles of music that have evolved over time. Music is also a science of sounds produced by the vibrations of voices and instruments. Likewise, when singing a song, children are connecting with language by reading words. With these connections in mind, "Bate, Bate Chocolate" will provide the foundation for activities that will be enriched by studying the vocabulary and language semantics of the song lyrics, the musical form of the song, the historical significance of the song text, and the history of chocolate. Increasing the knowledge base of my

students through a variety of activities will endow them with the skills to complete three writing assignments related to "Bate, Bate Chocolate" as outlined in my unit. This folk song (also found in chant form) can be located under other titles, including the following: "Bate, Bate"; "El chocolate"; "Rima de Chocolate"; "Chocolate - Hot Chocolate"; and "Chocolate".

Rationale

Children love to sing. Attending music class gives students a variety of opportunities for self-expression. Students look forward to coming to a class where they can jump, hop, slide, stretch, and walk to the beat. With their bodies, they can demonstrate high and low, fast and slow, loud and soft. They enjoy singing, clapping, chanting, tapping, rapping, and humming. During this past school year, one student whose class came to music every Friday, would greet me on Monday mornings with, "I'll see you on Friday." Using the "chocolate" theme will enrich the desire for all of my fifth graders to come to music class.

Children in all corners of the world have sung songs, chanted rhymes, and played games for centuries. Such folklore is derived from diverse cultures and is usually transmitted from child to child and from generation to generation. For a number of reasons, music is an enriching experience. Children learn by singing songs, chanting rhymes, playing hand games and finger plays, and by playing with each other. For that reason, the YMCA-YWCA of Guelph (Canada) uses a curriculum entitled "Playing to Learn" that was developed by the YMCA of Greater Toronto. It is based on the fact that playing engages a child in a way that provides the foundation for language and literacy, science and technology, mathematics, and the arts. (2)

I am a composer, and throughout each school year I have continued to compose songs with lyrics that support specific subjects and content areas. In 1998, I composed a song

about the Jamestown colony that, according to one fourth grade teacher, helped her students learn and retain pertinent facts that were tested on the state History examination. I am a fervent believer in integrating music with various aspects of the curriculum. Children find joy, power, and a passionate sense of self in music. It is important to them and holds the capacity to serve a variety of purposes.

A first grade teacher at a school where I taught at the beginning of my career utilizes a song booklet of original songs every day as a means of fostering a greater interest in reading for beginners. She once told me that she believed that a student who can sing a song can read a song. We would often team-teach when she would ask for my assistance with teaching specific tunes and with aligning those tunes to her original history-related lyrics. I would sing the tune *a cappella* (without accompaniment) for the students and assist them in fitting the lyrics to the tune. My colleague is not alone in her approach to teaching reading. The notion of singing to expedite reading in young children is shared by many educators across the country.

My personal experience shows that when facts are written as lyrics to tunes, both traditional and original tunes, the facts are learned at a faster rate, and overall retention of the facts is better. I have assisted students in all subject areas during tutorial sessions and have witnessed those who are having trouble learning the subject matter. This experience jolted my memory of a typical choir class, where I give students a song, sometimes with extensive lyrics, and they are able to learn the song within the allotted forty-five-minute time frame. I then decided to write songs with specific facts taken from a variety of disciplines. Consequently,

when I teach these same students in music class and take subject matter from mathematics (place values and skip counting), history (Jamestown), and science (the earth's rotation and revolution), and then compose songs with both original and traditional tunes based on that specific subject matter, the students are able to learn one song per forty-five-minute class session; learning the song is synonymous with learning the lyrics, and the lyrics are merely the specific facts creatively written.

Music is also used as a motivator for learning. In 1994, I composed a song entitled "Wintertime" for my elementary school choir to sing for our district's City Hall music series. I still teach this song and often have my choir sing it at Winter Holiday programs. The song consists of vivid descriptions of winter scenery, adjectives to describe wintry conditions, metaphors about coming in from the cold, and messages that nurture self-esteem. Because of singing this song in choir class, a third grader, who was assigned to make a seasonal diorama for her science class, chose the winter season because she had experienced a positive feeling from singing the song as a member of the choir. The song made her feel good, and hence, she wanted her diorama to reflect the positive feeling that the song conveyed for her.

I am aiming to teach the unit on "Bate, Bate Chocolate" in a way that will inspire my fifth grade students to have a positive feeling about writing. Most students view writing assignments as either boring or too difficult. In executing my unit, I will create excitement and enthusiasm by delivering the information in ways that will foster more positive feelings. The song has already traveled with its carriers from Mexico into the United States. This fact is evident in an observation that I made this school year in a third grade class in which I taught the chant version of the song. In this class, two students knew the chant and informed me that they frequently performed "Bate, Bate Chocolate" with an accompanying hand game. More than likely, others have either participated in this hand game or have witnessed it on the playground. I have invited these students to come to the fifth grade classes during the first week of my unit and demonstrate the hand game with which they are familiar.

I teach in each classroom teacher's homeroom. I use a cart on which I house my music textbooks, instruments, music terminology charts, and CD player. There are advantages to teaching from a cart. The students are already seated at their desks when I arrive. I also have access to the classroom overhead projector, student dictionary sets, and blackboard space. Similarly, the students have access to their personal school supplies. I see each class once a week for forty-five minutes. Because the fifth graders in my district are administered the state writing test during the middle of the second semester, I intend to teach my unit at the beginning of the second semester. This is a time during which fifth grade classroom teachers are teaching their students a variety of writing strategies and giving them a series of prompts on which to practice their writing skills. My goal has always been to work with the classroom teachers. Consequently, I will be executing my unit during the same time period. This goal was the motivational force that encouraged me to incorporate writing with music.

I recognize the need for my fifth grade students to be able to grasp a greater appreciation for and knowledge of Latino cultures as they begin to become more aware of the culturally rich presence of this, now the largest, minority group in the United States. The growing Latino population is prevalent in every segment of society, yet school students who are not of Latino descent know very little about the history and culture of the people. My unit is designed to teach students about Latino cultures, specifically the culture of the Mexican community, by teaching them from the perspectives of writing, history, and music.

One way to learn about a particular ethnic group's culture is to learn about its music and its food. The renowned gastronome, Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, once stated, "Tell me what you eat, and I'll tell you who

you are." (3) Food in general is a form of cultural symbolism. Each culture is known for certain foods that make up its general cuisine. Mexico is easily defined by its regional foods as well as its indigenous music. The Mexican song "Bate, Bate Chocolate" offers me the chance to tell students that chocolate is a key ingredient in Mexican cuisine and was a pre-Hispanic commodity that continued to thrive in different ways in New Spain (the colonial Spanish name for Mexico).(4) My students will learn about music, history, culture, and cuisine and will be inspired to write three short assignments from teacher-created writing prompts. Each prompt will be based on the chocolate theme.

Objectives

Creating a Desire to Write: My Objectives as a Teacher

I want my students to be eager to put down their thoughts and creative ideas on paper. Students typically tend to approach writing assignments with a sense of anxiety. This curriculum unit seeks to implant a strong motivational desire within students to write. I currently teach Kindergarten through fifth grade. This unit is most appropriate for my fifth grade students because it involves three writing exercises, and writing is a critical strand of their Language Arts curriculum and a state-tested standard. It could also be utilized in the fourth grade as a fun writing activity.

I teach three fifth grade classes at my school. Each class meets once a week for forty-five minutes. My unit is designed to be taught over a six week period and will engage fifth graders in writing three different thematic assignments based on the lyrics and contextual significance of the "Bate, Bate Chocolate" song and rhyme.

Having the Desire to Write: The Students' Objectives

I want my students to have the desire to write. One objective will be for them to expand their English vocabulary substantially so that when they write, they will not be at a loss for words. I also want the students to increase their Spanish vocabulary so that they can include Spanish words in their writing exercises. Another objective that my students will have is to develop a solid grasp of the writing process for writing paragraphs. I want them to be so stimulated by both the song "Bate, Bate Chocolate" and the tools that they have acquired that they are eager to write down their thoughts in a variety of ways.

Integrating Subjects

In my district, media specialists, art teachers, music teachers, and physical education teachers must create ways to integrate their primary subject matter with other subjects in the school curriculum. My unit incorporates music with World Studies and English, also referred to as Language Arts. It covers the different versions of "Bate, Bate Chocolate" and its historical significance within Mexican culture. The history of chocolate as it relates to the Aztec history of Mexico is also a primary focal point. In my district, the World Studies curriculum is the History and Social Science course of study for fifth grade students. (To view the standards associated with Music, World Studies, and Language Arts, see Appendix II).

Mexican History: Background Information for Teachers

I want my students to learn about the history of one of the predecessors of present-day Mexicans, the Aztecs. An abbreviated study of the Aztec people will provide not only an adequate foundation for studying the history of chocolate, but it will also give students factual information about the Aztec Empire.

Aztec Civilization

It is important for students to learn about the Aztec civilization before the Spanish conquest. The Aztec Empire existed between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries and dominated Central and Southern Mexico. During pre-colonial times, the Aztecs thrived largely because of their organization, alliances, and military strength. Rees's *Understanding People in the Past: The Aztecs* and Steele's *The Aztec News* both provide colorful pre-colonial maps of the Aztec Empire. (See other sources in "Materials for Classroom Use"). Other objectives for the students include learning about Aztec ceremonies, architecture, gods and religious beliefs, home life, sculpture, picture writing, bartering, and music.

A study of Aztec agriculture will allow the students to see how important chocolate was as a plant in ancient times. Crops grew easily, and they included corn, tomatoes, beans, chili peppers, prickly pears, maguey cactus, and cocoa (or cacao) trees. (5) I will show pictures of these crops as illustrated in Philip Steele's *The Aztec News*, Pamela Odijk's *The Ancient World: The Aztecs*, and Mason's *If You Were There: Aztec Times*.

Aztec music, as observed in many paintings and from precious artifacts (flutes, shell trumpets, gongs, drums), played an important part in Aztec life. Townsend's *The Aztecs*, Baquedano's *Aztec, Inca, & Maya*, and Time-Life Books' *Aztecs: Reign of Blood & Splendor* offer spectacular photographs of architectural ruins, artifacts, and drawings for students to see.

The Aztecs were ruled by kings commonly called emperors. Emperor Moctezume (commonly known as Montezuma II) became ruler of the Aztecs in 1502. He frequently drank chocolatl, which was a cold, bitter drink and nothing like the sweetened chocolate that most are familiar with today. The drink would sometimes be flavored with vanilla and spices. (6) "Sometimes they brought [Montezuma] in cups of pure gold a drink made of the cocoa plant," according to Bernal Diaz Castillo, chronicler of the conquest. (7) Students will enjoy pictures of Aztecs preparing and drinking chocolate in Coe's *The True History of Chocolate*.

The Aztec Empire was a city-state that Juan González describes as comparable to the sophistication and splendor of Europe.(8) By the early sixteenth century, its capital, Tenochtilán, was one of the world's largest cities. When the Spaniards arrived along the shores of the Aztec territory, a series of battles ensued. Hernán Cortés was leading the Spanish adventurers. The Aztecs were never defeated in open battle. Cortés did not really "conquer" the Aztecs. He actually led a revolt by having neighboring Totonac and Tlaxcalan tribes join him to help him defeat the Aztecs. Likewise, diseases brought by Europeans killed thousands of Native people in Mexico, making European military efforts far easier. When the Aztec Empire came to an end, a new nation, Mexico, was about to be born.(9)

The Spanish conquest of the Aztecs took place in 1521, resulting in both the domination of the Spanish language, and in the infusion of the Spanish language with the thousands of regional varieties of Native American languages, including Nahuatl. This is an important fact for students to know because it will assist them in understanding the origins of the word "chocolate" in relationship to the Nahuatl language. These facts

will also help the students understand why the Spanish language is so prevalent in Mexico and how the culture of the Aztec civilization remained with the natives after the conquest.

History of Chocolate

I am interested in this unit topic because chocolate is a favorite flavor and culinary delight among children, and a topic on which I feel they will enjoy writing. I chose the chocolate theme because it seeks to impart a delicious and enticing incentive for writing. The unit also relates to my desire to teach students more about Mexican culture. In its various forms, chocolate is now popular worldwide, but it is important for students to know that it is a gift from Mexico and Central America.

When elementary school students in the United States think of chocolate, they think of it in its smooth, creamy, solid form that is sweetened with sugar and melts when put in the mouth. Chocolate has been an important food in Mexican culture for centuries and is often used in its unsweetened form as a spice in many Mexican dishes.

Mexico City, Oaxaca, Michoacán, and Tabasco are states famous for their production of Mexican chocolate. In Oaxaca, cooks buy cacao beans from local markets and grind them with sugar, cinnamon, and almonds. Many cooks hand-grind the chocolate on a stone *metate*, a lava-grinding stone that is also used to grind corn for tortillas. They warm the stone over hot coals and work the chocolate paste back and forth with a rock-grinding roller until it is a shiny, clay-like mass. With their hands they pat the mass and mold it into disks. Later, a disk can be chopped and mixed with hot water or milk and beaten or stirred inside a bulb-shaped pot with a narrow mouth called an *olla para chocolate*. A carved wooden beater called a *molinillo* is used to help dissolve the chocolate pieces and to create the froth. (10) It is this exact process that is the source of the lyrics of "Bate, Bate Chocolate."

Strategies

First, I will begin teaching my unit by playing two versions of "Bate, Bate Chocolate." I will alternate the song version and the chant version continuously while displaying objects for the students to see, smell, and touch. These objects will include cacao beans, a *molinillo*, a variety of chocolate products (milk chocolate, varying percentages of dark chocolate, cocoa powder, chocolate syrup, brownie mix, chocolate candy bars), a Mexican flag, and an *olla para chocolate* (the pot in which hot chocolate mixtures are stirred). I will pass around the different chocolate products for the students to experience by observing, smelling and touching. By arousing the senses and introducing the students to some of the items mentioned in "Bate, Bate Chocolate," they will be more easily capable of identifying with the theme of the unit. By hearing the song and chant continuously, the students will become more familiar with it.

Next, I will pass around a small see-through bag of cacao beans. At this point, I will also show illustrations of the cacao tree and the inside and outside of a cacao pod. Books that I will use to show illustrations of the cacao trees, pods and beans include Coe's *The True History of Chocolate* and Baquedano's *Aztec, Inca, and Maya*.

It is important for students to know the history of chocolate. The English word *chocolate* comes from the Nahuatl language of the Aztecs. In this language, *xoco-atl* means "bitter water" and *cacahuatl-atl* means

"cacao water." (11) The regional origins of chocolate are believed to be an area between the Amazon and Orinoco rivers. These rivers are located in South America. (12) At this point, I will show the students several classroom maps of these two rivers as well as maps showing the location of the Aztec Empire. These maps are found in Odijk's *The Ancient World: The Aztecs*, and Armentrout's *Timelines of Ancient Civilizations: Aztecs*.

The cacao tree grows cacao pods that, when cut open, reveal a sweet pulp surrounding dark cacao beans. These pods spread throughout Mesoamerica, which was the area associated with high cultural awareness. In pre-Conquest times this area included the southern part of Mexico, Belize, Guatemala, and portions of El Salvador and Honduras. (13) I will use Kimmel's story and picture book *Montezuma and the Fall of the Aztecs*, Tanaka's *Lost Temple of the Aztecs*, and Mason's *If You Were There: Aztec Times* to show maps of the Mesoamerica area. This activity also allows students to meet a World Studies standard for identifying and locating continents, oceans, and major features on maps and globes. Again, using Coe's *The True History of Chocolate*, I will show pictures of the cacao tree. During this time period, chocolate was used by the Olmecs, the Americas' first civilization. The Olmecs then passed cacao on to the Mayan culture, which referred to the beans as *kakaw*. (14) Many authors note that when Christopher Columbus encountered a Mayan trading canoe in 1502, he knew that these beans were valuable by the way the Mayans scrambled to retrieve the ones that had fallen, picking them up "as if their eyes had fallen out of their heads." (15) Subsequently, the Mayans passed chocolate on to the Aztecs through the trading industry. As a point of reference, I will show the location of the Maya Empire as shown on a colorful map of the empires of the Aztecs, Mayas, and Incas in Baquedano's *Aztec, Inca, and Maya*.

During the time of the Aztecs, chocolate was both a food commodity and a form of currency. Goods were bought and sold by barter. Tenochtitlán served as the center of a great market where thousands of Aztecs came every day to buy and sell goods. A specified number of cacao beans, for example, could buy a dugout canoe, a slave, or a feather cape. (16)

Because cacao beans were also used as currency, a drink made from the beans was considered a holy beverage. The noblemen of the Aztec Empire claimed *chocolatl* as a favorite cold drink and often sipped it during religious celebrations. During this time, chocolate was also commonly drunk as a mixture with chile peppers, flowers that resemble black peppers, the seeds of the bitter almond-tasting pizle, or lime water. (17)

During colonial times, the Spaniards continued to grow the cacao trees. These trees remained a colonial crop until the eighteenth century, and in 1753 they were given the scientific name *Theobroma cacao* by the eighteenth-century Swedish scientist Carl von Linné. *Theobroma* is the name of the genus to which cacao (the "chocolate tree") belongs. It means "food of the gods." (18) Production of chocolate products dramatically increased when the wealthy were no longer the only ones privileged enough to drink it. When women and children began to drink cocoa (invented in 1828 by the Dutchman Van Houten), the product became domesticated. (19) Cocoa is one of the display items that I will allow students to experience with their senses.

Today hot chocolate is a popular children's drink in Mexico. Children often sing the "Bate, Bate Chocolate" song or chant the rhyme when the drink is being stirred, singing or chanting faster and faster as the drink is stirred faster and faster. The drink is customarily made from Mexican beans that are toasted very dark, then coarsely ground over heat with sugar to make a chocolate disk that dissolves in water or milk. In today's Mexican culture, the best chocolate is handmade and called *chocolate de metate* "chocolate from the hand-grinding stone." (20) Baquedano's *Aztec, Inca, and Maya* has superb illustrations of grinding stones. I will use this book as a read-aloud because it also contains other illustrations that will be of interest to the students.

Elements of Music

"Bate, Bate Chocolate" is both a song and a chant. Although I will teach the chant version during the introductory portion of my unit, my main focus will be the song version. As a music teacher, it is imperative for me to teach the music elements of the song that are essential to understanding its structure.

The song embodies elements of music that deal with repetitive rhythms, AB song form, and a two-pitch melody that uses the pitch syllables *do* and low *ti*. In F Major, the key in which the song is written in Orozco's *De Colores and Other Latin-American Folk Songs for Children*, these two pitch syllables translate to the note names *F* and *E*. Many folk songs utilize only two, three or four pitches to develop the melody. Consequently, the two-pitch melody in this folk song is not uncommon. Some recordings of the song use three pitches. Students will listen to both the two-pitch and three-pitch versions. It will be important to review the seven letters of the music alphabet (ABCDEFG). To demonstrate the movement of the melody, I will write the text on the board and place the appropriate note names on top of each syllable of the text to show the melodic direction of the music. In part A there is a repeated pattern of paired eighth notes followed by three quarter notes. The B section consists solely of repeated paired eighth notes. During my lessons, these terms will be defined and explained as they relate to the song.

The action part of the song, called the B section, describes the stirring action used to mix the concoction. The *molinillo* is the special utensil that is held between the palms and rotated back and forth as a means of mixing or stirring the chocolate drink. This utensil is used to smoothly incorporate a chocolate disk into the liquid. I will also supply a clear jar filled with water and a *molinillo* for students to simulate rotating the utensil inside the chocolate pot.

Another song with a similar theme, "Chocolate (Is My Favorite Vegetable)" by Les Julian, will serve as the comparative musical selection. I will also teach the music elements of this song. It incorporates the same general elements of rhythm, song form, and melody, but in different ways. "Chocolate (Is My Favorite Vegetable)" uses a samba rhythm, a three-verse/refrain form, a through-composed melodic form, and a rap section.

I will use recordings to help teach both songs. By using teacher-modeling, I will use the echo-sing and echo-speak strategies to teach both "Bate, Bate Chocolate" and "Chocolate (Is My Favorite Vegetable)." I will sing/speak one line and then have the students repeat what they have heard. I will start with one line at a time and then increase the number of lines each time until they are first able to sing with guided practice and then able to sing independently. Understanding music terminology is the key to explaining the components of a song. This unit focuses on the Music standards that appear in Appendix II.

This curriculum unit can be adapted by using other Latino children's songs such as "Arroz con Leche" which is both a song and a singing game, the latter of which is most popular among Mexican children. The song is found in several different versions and sometimes with different titles. Different versions exist in Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Argentina. These versions harbor varying forms in which the melody and melodic form may be slightly different and in which the words and references to places often change from one country to another. Because different versions are found throughout Latin America, this song offers an opportunity to compare the historical aspects of at least three different versions. This song also mentions a food product, *arroz con leche*. The cultural implications of *arroz con leche*, literally "rice with milk" or "rice pudding," would allow students to explore the cultural significance of that dish in Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Argentina. Although rice pudding is not the subject of the song, it holds marked symbolism that would give the unit a literary venue worth exploring.

Graphic Organizers

I will use Venn Diagrams and Sensory Notes to help my elementary students organize their ideas in a systematic manner. These graphic organizers will extend each student's vocabulary and will be identified as resources to assist with writing.

Venn Diagrams allow students to compare and contrast two ideas or concepts. After studying the music format of both "Bate, Bate Chocolate" and "Chocolate (Is My Favorite Vegetable)" each fifth grade class will construct a Venn Diagram on the blackboard to consider the two songs. Construction of a Venn Diagram will include two overlapping circles, large enough to write inside. The mid-point where the circles overlap will provide the area for writing ideas and concepts that the two songs have in common. The open spaces of both circles that do not overlap will serve as spaces for writing information that is pertinent only to that particular song. I will initiate construction of the diagram by asking what the songs have in common. This activity will be followed by filling in the spaces inside both circles with information that makes the two songs different. Students will use this graphic organizer to write three explanatory paragraphs on how the two songs are the same and different.

I will also guide students through an exercise in taking and using sensory notes. Sensory notes are designed to guide students in writing down words and phrases that describe what they see, hear, smell, and how they feel. In my unit, taking sensory notes will give the students an additional vocabulary list from which to draw content for their third writing assignment. These notes will be taken in response to hearing Rick Bayless's oral account of a chocolate experience in Mexico. (21) Bayless is a renowned food historian whose specialty is Mexican cuisine.

Writing Themes in "Bate, Bate Chocolate"

Writing is an integral part of the curriculum for fifth graders and is a state-tested objective. Within this objective, students must write to describe, to inform, to entertain, and to explain. For my unit, students will write three pieces - one descriptive paragraph about their favorite chocolate candy bar, three explanatory paragraphs to compare and contrast "Bate, Bate Chocolate" and "Chocolate (Is My Favorite Vegetable)," and an alliterative poem to entertain. Thematic material gleaned from the lyrics, music structure, and historical aspects of "Bate, Bate Chocolate" will serve as sources for intriguing prompts for writing. English teachers may find this unit helpful as a way to interest students in writing about a subject or topic - such as chocolate - that has mass appeal.

Word Walls

Using the senses will help students begin to generate vocabulary words that will be used in the unit. I will first start a Word Wall of Objects from the objects that are shown and circulated around the room. I will ask the students to name the objects; as they name them, I will write each one on an index card and post it on the Word Wall of Objects.

Next, I will construct a Word Wall of Adjectives. My prompting question will be: What adjectives can you use to describe chocolate? I will remind the students to think of ways to describe the texture, taste, smell, appearance, and sound (how it sounds when it is chewed, crushed, drunk, or blended), of different forms of chocolate. Again I will write each of the students' words on index cards and post them on the Word Wall of Adjectives.

A third Word Wall of Spanish Words will allow the students to understand pertinent Spanish vocabulary that I will be using when I teach the unit. For this Word Wall, I will invite the Spanish teacher to assist with pronouncing and spelling the Spanish names of some of the objects that I will display. During class, the Word Walls will be hung on the blackboard to provide always-visible vocabulary that I will use when teaching the unit and that the students will use when writing their assignments. They will serve as constant reminders of the topic of the unit. Since each class will generate its own words for the Word Walls, I will need to post only the words created by that particular class.

As a music teacher, I have posters with descriptions of the music elements and posters with music signs, terminology, symbols, and notes. Collaboratively, these wall hangings will serve as reminders of music terms and symbols that the students have learned from kindergarten through fifth grade. I travel with these materials on my music cart.

Read-Alouds

I commonly use read-alouds because I can show illustrations and teach an entire class about a particular aspect of a unit. Because I teach my music classes weekly instead of daily, read-alouds allow me to cover a substantial amount of material in a short period of time. I will read and show illustrations about the cultural heritage of Mexicans in the United States and about the history of the Aztecs. These books are located in the "Materials for Classroom Use" section of this curriculum. I will prompt the students to discuss the pictures by pointing to specific illustrations and ask them to describe what they see. I will also ask them to tell what they know about the pictures based on what I have just read. For emphasis, I will circulate these books for individual student perusal.

Several books aforementioned offer spectacular illustrations and explanations of the popular chocolate beverage sung and chanted about in "Bate, Bate Chocolate." One children's music book in particular provides a vivid illustration of a mother making the chocolate drink by rotating a *molinillo* within a chocolate pot. This book is José-Luis Orozco's *De Colores and Other Latin-American Folk Songs for Children*. I chose this book because it shows a fun and busy moment in the family kitchen.

How to Write a Paragraph

There are countless ways to assist students in organizing their thoughts in order to write a paragraph. In my unit, I will always give students their topics in the form of a prompt. My students will be writing to describe, to explain, and to entertain. For each writing exercise, I will write a prompt on the board. The first prompt is "What is your favorite chocolate candy bar and why?" This particular prompt will engage the students in writing a descriptive paragraph. It will serve as the basis for their first sentence, the topic sentence. The students will then utilize their Word Walls in order to descriptively write about their favorite candy bar, focusing on why it is their favorite. The visible nouns and adjectives on the Word Walls serve to instill confidence so that the students will not be at a total loss for words. The second assignment will consist of three paragraphs. For the first paragraph, students will utilize their Venn Diagram to write about ways in which "Bate, Bate Chocolate" and "Chocolate (Is My Favorite Vegetable)" are alike. The second and third paragraphs will include details about each song that distinguish the two. The third assignment is an entertaining poem that the students will write using alliteration. The students will formulate their assignments with the assistance of the Word Walls and Sensory Notes.

Classroom Activities

My school district follows a precise instructional model for lesson plans. This model includes the following components: Snapshot, Lesson Objectives, Instructional Focus, Procedures and Activities (including Guided and Independent Practice), Class Review, Application, Assessment, Homework, and a Maintenance Moment. (22) See Appendix I for more details. Although I am using these components in the formation of my plans, the lessons in this unit can be adapted to any lesson plan format. Each lesson lasts forty-five minutes.

Lesson Plan 1

The opening lesson for my curriculum unit will awaken the senses. I will bring an assortment of chocolate products and kitchen utensils mentioned in "Bate, Bate Chocolate." The students will sing, chant, and create two Word Walls.

Snapshot

On a long table in the front of the classroom, I will assemble an assortment of chocolate products, chocolate candy bars, a *molinillo*, an *olla para chocolate*, a map of Mexico, and a bag of cacao beans. To increase student enthusiasm, I will wear a *sombrero* and display a Mexican flag in the front of the classroom next to the U. S. flag. In my opening remarks, I will ask the students what all of the objects and pictures have in common. Then, I will have the students chorally read two sentences from MacLeod's *Chock Full of Chocolate* that I will write on the blackboard: "From ancient Mexico to outer space, chocolate's been there! The Aztec people were slurping hot chocolate more than seven hundred years ago." (23) I will circulate the objects around the room so that students can observe, touch, and smell them. This introductory snapshot is designed to take ten minutes of class time. I will play recordings of the song and chant versions of "Bate, Bate Chocolate" during this time.

Lesson Objectives

This opening lesson will include state objectives from the Music, World Studies, and Language Arts Standards of Learning objectives. See Appendix II for a list of these objectives.

Classroom Materials

The students will use the *Share the Music 3* pupil book and CDs for this lesson. I will display the following items mentioned in the "Snapshot" on a table in front of the class. I will also be using a Word Wall of Objects and a Word Wall of Adjectives, both with accompanying index cards. Recordings will be used for listening purposes.

Instructional Focus

Using echo-speaking and echo-singing, I will use the next ten minutes to teach the "Bate, Bate Chocolate" chant and song to the students. The students will use their pupil books to look at the words. After teaching the chant and song, I will play recordings of both the chant and the song. I will have the students sing and chant with the recordings. Next, I will ask students to raise their hands if they can identify any item on the display table. I will then write the names of the items on index cards and post them on a Word Wall of Objects. Next, I will ask the students, "What adjectives would you use to describe chocolate?" Again, I will write down their

words on index cards and post them on a separate Word Wall of Adjectives. Following this activity, I will tell the students that during the course of this unit they will have an opportunity to write three fun assignments about chocolate using the words that they have generated. I will allow ten minutes for the creation of the Word Walls.

Procedures and Activities

I will invite two students who know a hand game to the chant version to demonstrate the hand game while I guide the class in reciting the chant. I will then allow five minutes of independent practice for each student to learn the hand game with a partner.

Class Review, Application, and Informal Assessment

Class Review will consist of performing the chant and song once each with the recordings. Students will apply what they have learned by choosing a partner and chanting "Bate, Bate Chocolate" while playing the hand game. An informal assessment will involve the students singing the song with the recording without my assistance. This portion of the lesson will last approximately five minutes.

Homework and Maintenance Moment

For homework, students are required to bring their favorite chocolate candy bar to school. For students who may be allergic to chocolate, any candy bar will be acceptable. During the final five minutes of class I will have students recite the words from both Word Walls twice as I point to them.

Lesson Plan 2

This lesson will take place during week three of my unit. The goal for this lesson is for students to create a Venn Diagram comparing and contrasting "Bate, Bate Chocolate" and "Chocolate (Is My Favorite Vegetable)." In a subsequent lesson, students will use the information in the Venn Diagram to write three paragraphs explaining how the two chocolate songs are the same and how they are different. Lesson Plan 2, however, will be comprised primarily of teaching the music elements of both songs and placing the appropriate information about the music elements within the correct areas of the Venn Diagram.

Snapshot

During the first five minutes of class, I will review the song version of "Bate, Bate Chocolate" with the students. I will have the students sing the song with the recording. Then, I will draw a Venn Diagram on the blackboard. Next, I will use the overhead projector to show a transparency of the sheet music and follow the music notes and lyrics as they sing. Next, I will play "Chocolate (Is My Favorite Vegetable)" and write a skeletal outline of the song structure on the blackboard. Any song can be used to compare with "Bate, Bate Chocolate."

Lesson Objectives

This lesson will include state objectives from both the Music and Language Arts Standards of Learning. See Appendix II.

Classroom Materials

The students will use the song lyrics and music terminology charts to fill in the Venn Diagram. They will each need one sheet of construction paper. I will also use a Venn Diagram worksheet as an assessment tool. Recordings of both songs will be used for listening purposes.

Instructional Focus

For the next ten minutes of class, I will use direct instruction to reinforce music terms that the students have studied since Kindergarten. A review of the song lyrics will be first. Then, I will use my music terminology charts, which are a part of my cart set-up, to give definitions and pertinent examples that are present in both songs. For "Bate, Bate Chocolate" I will write the note names of the three-note melody version on the transparency, above the lyrics. Music teachers who will be teaching this unit can teach the pitch syllables that correspond to the three notes: *do*, low *la* and low *ti*. The students will be asked to identify the names of the notes used in the song and to show where the notes move up, down, or remain the same. Next, I will point out parts A and B and show the students how these two parts of the song are different, especially with respect to the note values used. The song is sung and written in AB form.

The next ten minutes of the lesson will be used to teach the music elements that are particular to "Chocolate (Is My Favorite Vegetable)." Any song with a comparable theme will suffice as the comparison song. We will first read the song lyrics and discuss what they mean in the context of the chocolate theme. I will develop the outline produced on the blackboard during the Snapshot. Next, I will instruct the students on this song's note names, with primary emphasis on the refrain. We will discuss the definition of a refrain and how the refrain plays an important role in the form of this song. We will then analyze the note values used.

Procedures and Activities

This component is timed to last approximately ten minutes. Using guided practice, I will assist the students in filling in a large Venn Diagram on the blackboard. We will begin with filling in the overlapping section with ways in which both songs are alike. Then we will identify ways in which each song is different from the other by using the music terminology of the "Instructional Focus." As independent practice, the students will fill in individual diagrams on construction paper using the information in the Venn Diagram on the blackboard.

Class Review, Application, and Informal Assessment

These components can be completed within the remaining ten minutes of class. Class Review will consist of reviewing the melody and lyrics of both songs. Students will apply what they have learned by orally answering random questions pertaining to each song's melody, form and lyrics. The informal assessment will be in the form of a worksheet on which students will answer three questions about Venn Diagrams:

- How many of circles are needed to produce a Venn Diagram?
- Are the shapes placed side-by-side or overlapping?
- What information is included in a Venn Diagram?

Homework and Maintenance Moment

For homework, students will take their Venn Diagrams home and study them in preparation for writing the explanatory paragraphs the following week. Students will use any remaining time as a maintenance or transitional moment to study their diagrams.

Lesson Plan 3

This lesson will take place during week six of my unit. The goal for this lesson is for students to write a poem using alliteration. To prepare for writing this poem, students will create a list of sensory words and phrases. This list will be utilized along with the Word Walls of Objects, Adjectives, and Spanish Words, to create an entertaining poem.

Snapshot

During the first five minutes of class, I will have students read the words on all existing Word Walls that have been created during this unit. They will read each Word Wall two times.

Lesson Objectives

This opening lesson will include state objectives from the Music, World Studies, and Language Arts Standards of Learning. See Appendix II.

Classroom Materials

The students will use the Word Walls of Objects, Adjectives, and Spanish Words, as well as a list of Sensory Notes. I will also have the objects from Lesson Plan 1 on display for the students to see, touch, and smell.

Instructional Focus

For the next ten minutes of class, I will read a passage from renowned chef and food historian, Rick Bayless, in which he describes entering a *chocolatera* in Oaxaca, a city in Mexico: "Her cacao beans crackled as they roasted, her charcoal-heated *metate* coarsely ground the greasy beans back and forth with the cinnamon, almonds and sugar, and her hands patted the paste into fat cigar shapes. . . ." (24) These words offer a vivid description that will certainly create interest. Bayless's thoughts give students terms that describe what he sees, hears, smells, and tastes in a quaint eatery in Mexico. Using direct instruction, I will identify some of these sensory words and phrases.

Procedures and Activities

This next component is timed to last approximately five minutes. Using guided practice, I will assist students in locating other sensory words and phrases in the passage. Next, students will work independently to write down a personal list of sensory words and phrases formulated from their hands-on experiences with the displayed objects, and from their individual feelings and thoughts regarding Bayless's passage. Students will share their words with the class, and I will then write them on the blackboard in one list labeled "Sensory Words and Phrases."

Class Review, Application, and Informal Assessment

These components can be completed within the remaining twenty minutes of class. Class Review will consist of chorally reading all of the sensory words and phrases and then reading the words that begin with the letter *c*. Next, students will apply what they have learned by identifying words from the other Word Walls that begin the letter *c*. I will write these words on the blackboard next to the sensory words. From the Word Walls, the words listed on the board, and other words that individuals may generate themselves, each student will individually write a poem using alliteration, based on words that begin with the letter *c*. Using the title "A

Chocolate Dream," the informal assessment will be for the students to write their poem in a way that will be entertaining.

Homework and Maintenance Moment

For homework, students will practice their poems so that they may read them for their classmates for the next music class. As a closing activity, students will swap papers and read another classmate's poem. If there is ample time, partners may offer constructive criticism.

Appendix I

An Instructional Model

The "Snapshot" lasts less than ten minutes and is the attention-grabber of the lesson; it can include a review of what students have learned recently. The "Instructional Focus" makes up the majority of the lesson and is based on essential knowledge found in a variety of instructional materials. It encompasses the "Procedures and Activities" section which includes guided practice portions of the lesson in which the teacher models a procedure or assists the students with an activity. This component also includes an independent practice section in which the teacher provides assistance if needed and checks for progress. The "Class Review" includes randomly asking formal or informal questions and could include other interactive activities. The "Application" focuses on skills taught in the "Instructional Focus" section and can include life-applicable experiences that relate to the specific skill taught. The "Assessment" can be formal or informal and may incorporate test-taking strategies. "Homework" assignments give students extra practice. The "Maintenance Moment" is a closing or transitional activity.

Appendix II

Implementing District Standards

Richmond Public Schools provides a Curriculum Compass for all grade levels and for all subjects. For the purposes of my unit, I used the compasses for Grade 5 Language Arts, Grade 5 World Studies, and Grade 5 Music. Each compass outlines the Virginia Standards of Learning objectives and contains essential knowledge and skills pertinent to each standard. The following Virginia Standards of Learning objectives are specific to this curriculum unit and are the objectives from which the "Richmond Public Schools Instructional Resources" Curriculum Compasses are based. Teachers from any state, however, can adapt these same concepts within the parameters of their particular district standards.

Language Arts

5.6 - The student will read and demonstrate comprehension of nonfiction.

5.7 - The student will demonstrate comprehension of information from a variety of print resources.

5.8 - The student will write for a variety of purposes: to describe, to inform, to entertain, and to explain.

5.9 - The student will edit writing for correct grammar, capitalization, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure.

World Studies/Elementary

.12A - The student will demonstrate an understanding of the political, cultural, and economic conditions in the world about 1500 A. D. Within this standard, students are expected to use maps, globes, artifacts, and pictures and to identify and compare current boundaries with locations of ancient civilizations, empires, and kingdoms, including the Aztec Empire.

Music

5.4 - The student will respond to music with movement by performing dances and games from various cultures including traditional folk dances.

5.8 - The student will use music terminology to describe music performances and compositions.

5.11 - The student will place music examples into broad categories of style.

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