

Bébé Yo – Senegal Introductory notes

In its original form this was a well-known Senegalese popular song. Singer Metzo Djatah recently recorded his own version of the song and added a middle section. It was a massive No.1 hit in Senegal and confirmed Metzo as a leading performer there. He is World Voice Champion for Senegal; this means that he is the public face for the project in his country and champions our cause whenever he can.

Bébé Yo is a simple love song. Children of all ages love to sing it. With very young children the lyric may be considered to be a little adult in tone, so it is possible to sing it as a lullaby to a baby. One effective way of performing it is to sing two versions – one upbeat as a pop love song and one more gently as a lullaby.

Introduce some song-specific **Warm-Ups** to lead into the song. Take words or phrases for the song and turn them into a little game. Do the same with rhythms and melodic phrases. There may be an awkward melodic interval or tricky syncopation that could be turned into an enjoyable warm-up as preparation.

The chorus begins the song and is the ideal place to start. You can begin any way that you think will be effective with your particular pupils. I like to start by playing with the words of the chorus and making sure that the pronunciation is as authentic as we can get it. Set them to different rhythms and encourage the children to exaggerate their mouthing of the words. Then you can turn to the melody and learn it to 'na'.

With all the World Voice songs we are keen to encourage authenticity. The little syncopations in this song are essential to its character and it's a good idea to take these out of the song and to practice them as a game or an exercise (see above).

Use the pronunciation video guide on the World Voice Songbook to achieve the best pronunciation you can get. **Metzo** himself is doing it, so the children will have the added excitement of being taught how to pronounce the words by a real pop star! Break the words down into manageable units and show your pupils where the tongue has to be or what shape the lips should form. By going into this kind of detail we are setting an example of respect for other languages and cultures.