



VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION GUIDE

Workshop: *Learn a Sing-a-Long Song*

Teaching Artist: Emmy Bean

Learn the call-and-response song "Lil' Liza Jane." You will also learn about the history of folk songs and their ties to African culture and the seasonal migrant working class, and be introduced to Pearl Primus, a Black dancer who carried out the traditions of African dance culture in America.



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OBJECTIVES:

You will learn:

- The words and melody to two songs: "Funga Alafia" and "Lil' Liza Jane"
- How melody, rhythm, and movement can work together in a song
- Examples of call-and-response patterns in music
- How a song travels and changes over time in the folk music tradition
- Simple musical practices that can strengthen your natural musicianship through the voice and the body

MATERIALS:

- Lyrics to "Lil' Liza Jane" and "Funga Alafia"



DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING Methods

Instruction is provided in text and video formats, available in both Spanish and English.

You may also work by printing this art-making guide.

YouTube can automatically create closed captions.



Click the [CC] button near the lower right corner of the viewer frame.

Please note: captions are generated by algorithms, so their quality may vary.

Workshop Duration: 25-45 Minutes | ALL LEVELS

A variety of language subtitles are available for each video.



- **Rhythms or melodies may be expressed using any part of the body you wish.** You are not restricted to singing, clapping or tapping.
- If you'd like, may use a stand-in object, puppet, or favorite toy to perform musical actions for or with you.
- **You may engage with another friend, family member, or companion to perform the actions near you.** The rhythm of the song can be reinforced by tapping gently on your body or allowing you to feel the vibrations through a drum head/any other object that is tapped by your companion.



BACKGROUND/RESOURCES

You will be introduced to these artists, art histories, movements and/or concepts:

Call and response: A type of music in which the lyrics invite participation between two distinct parts of the song.

Menhaden fishing: A difficult seasonal job that attracted Black laborers who would migrate from place to place for their work. "Lil' Liza Jane" was among the folk songs that were sung by menhaden fishermen as a way to keep time and boost morale.

Fanga: A traditional style of dance that originated in Liberia or Sierra Leone.

LaRocque Bey: A dancer and drummer who created the song "Funga Alafia," inspired by the tune of "Lil' Liza Jane." "Funga" refers to the *fanga* dance, and "alafia" is a word in the Yoruba language that means "peace" or "welcome."

Pearl Primus: A dancer who started an African dance company in the United States that combined singing, dancing, and chanting in their performances. Primus studied the traditional dances of African people in Liberia and Sierra Leone, teaching her students styles like *fanga*.



INSTRUCTION:

Today's Project:
Sing a long song:
Lil Liza Jane / Funga Alafia



Today, we are going to be learning a song called "Lil' Liza Jane."



"Lil' Liza Jane" is a type of song called a **call and response**.

Li'l Liza Jane



I know a gal that you don't know, Li'l Li - za Jane,
'Way down south in Bal - ti - mo', Li'l Li - za Jane.
O E - - li - - za li'l Li - - za Jane,
O E - - li - - za, li'l Li - - za Jane!

The call: one part, changes each time it's sung. The response: the other part, always stays the same. Let's listen and see if you can hear the difference.



Lil' Liza Jane

*I know a gal that you don't know, Lil' Liza Jane
Way down south in Baltimore, Lil' Liza Jane*



Hear it? "Lil' Liza Jane," the title of the song, is also the response. When we sing each part, maybe we can also come up with a movement.



I like to do a movement that helps me keep the rhythm while I sing. For the call, I'll clap in time with the song.



INSTRUCTION CONTINUED:



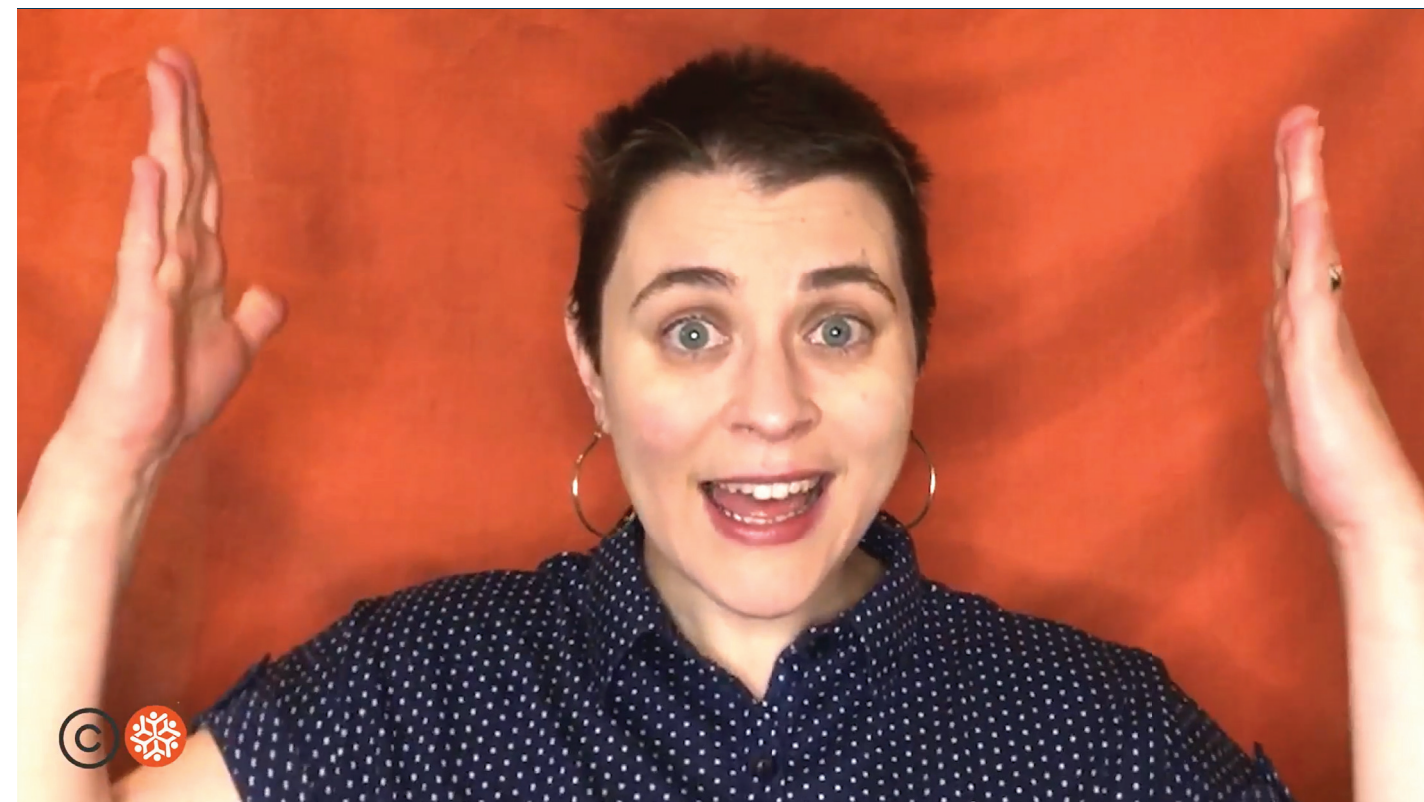
You could do a movement that also helps you keep the rhythm. Maybe you can clap, maybe you can tap your head or your shoulders or your nose or your belly. You can do any movement to help you keep the rhythm and sing the song.



Try your own movement this time, and let's use it to sing the call. I'm going to clap: *I know a gal that you don't know*



Great! Now, let's come up with a movement for the response. My move is going to be me closing my fists and opening them again.



Let's sing the response, with our movement included: *Lil' Liza Jane*.

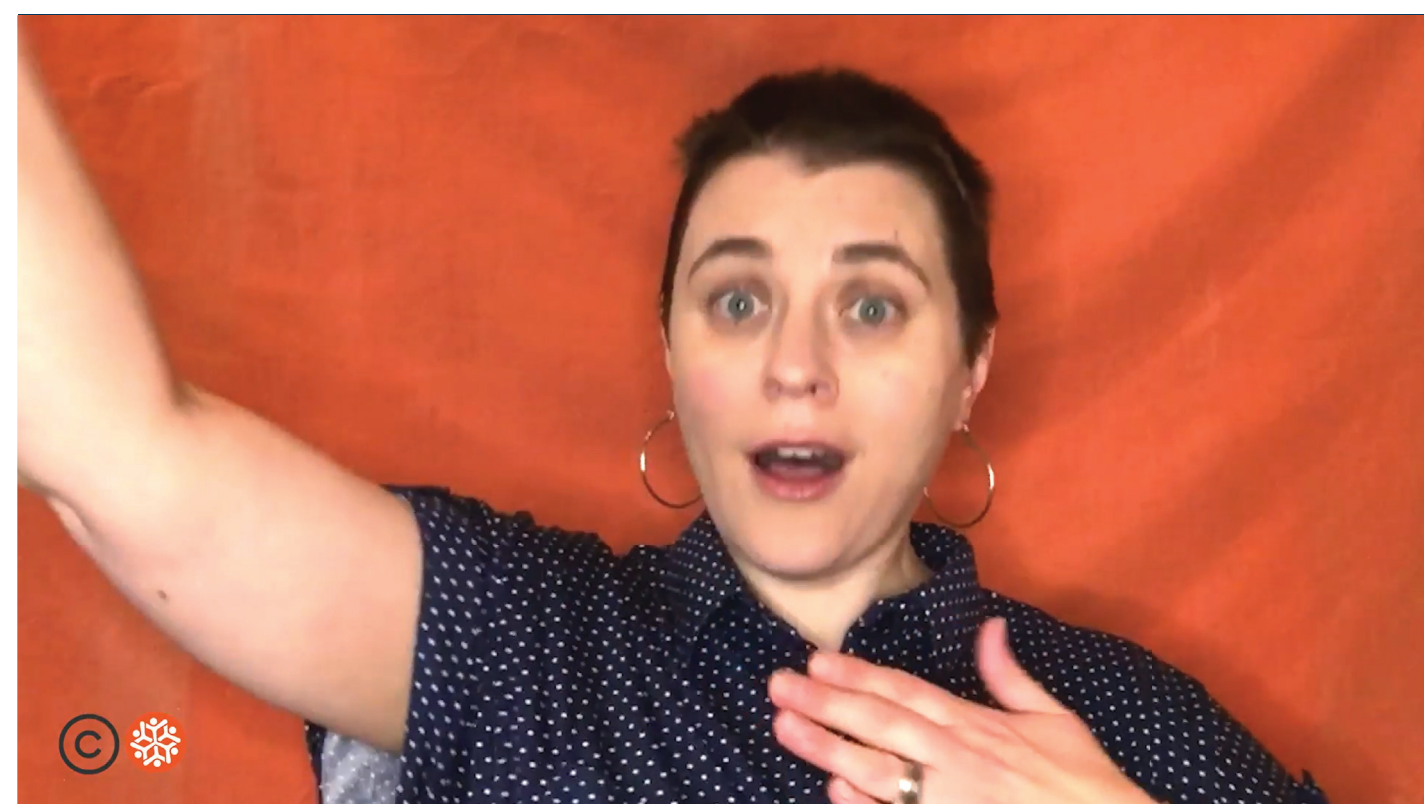


Now, let's put it all together with our movements!
*I know a gal that you don't know, Lil' Liza Jane
Way down south in Baltimore, Lil' Liza Jane*



Now, we're forgetting—there's one more part!
It goes: *Oh, lil' Liza, Lil' Liza Jane*.

INSTRUCTION CONTINUED:



I'm going to add a movement to set us off for that part. I'll extend my hand outwards, like so.



Let's sing the whole thing together with our moves. Ready? Here we go!



*I know a gal that you don't know, Lil' Liza Jane
Way down south in Baltimore, Lil' Liza Jane*



*Oh lil' Liza, Lil' Liza Jane
Oh, lil' Liza, Lil' Liza Jane*



Great job! Now, let's learn a little bit of the history behind this song.



R. Gregory Christie
From: *It Jes' Happened:
When Bill Traylor Started to Draw*, 2012

Back in the 1800s, when Black people were enslaved as laborers in America, "Lil' Liza Jane" was a popular song for dancing, singing, and entertainment after the work was done.



INSTRUCTION CONTINUED:



On some plantations, when the white owners allowed it, there would be fiddle-playing and music in the evenings. In the 1800s, "Lil' Liza Jane" was a popular song among freed Black laborers as well.



The Charles A. Farrell Photo Collection,
State Archives of North Carolina
Menhaden Fishermen



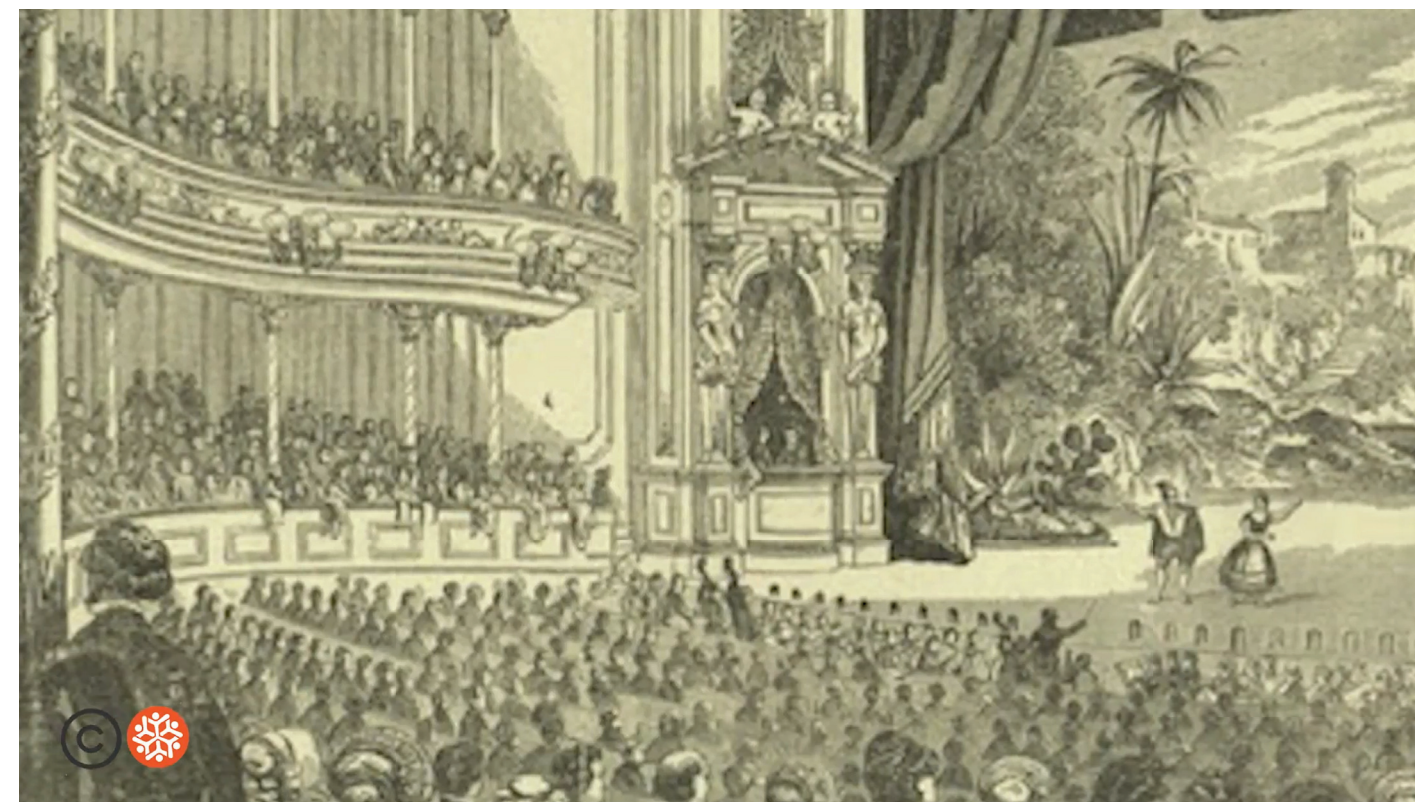
On the east coast of the U.S., "Lil' Liza Jane" was a popular song among menhaden fishermen. **Menhaden fishing** was a seasonal job that attracted Black laborers who migrated from place to place for work.



Menhaden fishing was a difficult job. Like many jobs for seasonal migrant workers in the U.S., it involved hard labor and sometimes the white bosses would withhold their pay for their workers or abuse them.



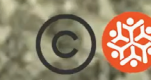
"Lil' Liza Jane" was sung by the workers to help them keep time together and to lift their spirits.



Soon, the song became well-known, and it was performed across the country in vaudeville and in minstrel shows.



Vaudeville Music Hall



Often in these shows, white performers would appear in blackface. This was a kind of makeup meant to make them look like African Americans. This makeup was part of a costume that was intended to make fun of Black people, mocking their speech, their physicality, and their culture.



INSTRUCTION CONTINUED:



Minstrel shows were openly racist, and widely accepted among white people as “good entertainment.” It is important that we never, ever recreate this kind of performance.



However, like many songs, poems, and other works of art, Black people found a way to revive, reuse, and carry them on in new ways.



Gerda Peterich
Pearl Primus in
African Ceremonial, 1954

In the 1920s, dancers like **Pearl Primus** started African dance companies in the U.S. These performances combined singing, dancing, and chanting.



Pearl Primus carried on these traditions by studying the traditional dances of African people in Liberia and Sierra Leone.



One of these dances she taught to her students in America was **fanga**. Fanga involved singing and chanting to set the stage, locating the dances in their place in history.

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One of these chants went: *Funga alafia, ashe ashe.*



INSTRUCTION CONTINUED:



Funga refers to the fanga dance, and *alafia* is a word in the Yoruba language that means “peace” or “welcome.” *Ashe* is also a word in their Yórubá language meaning “so be it.”



When dancing fanga became popular among African dance companies in the U.S., a dancer and drummer named **LaRocque Bey** came up with a song using the words that Pearl Primus used in her company.



The song became known as “Funga Alafia.” The tune he chose was inspired by the song “Lil’ Liza Jane.”

M FUNGA ALAFIA



a - fia, a - she, a - she. Fun- ga a - la - fia, a -

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“Funga Alafia” is a song that is sung, danced, and moved to in many different ways throughout the United States. You may have heard this song sung at school, at a religious service, or another gathering of family, friends, or neighbors.



And if you’ve never heard it before, listen and see if you can tell how it’s similar to “Lil’ Liza Jane.”



Thank you for taking the time to learn about music and history today!



LEARNING STANDARDS

This workshop is aligned to the following state and national anchor standards. It can be differentiated for learners at every grade level. (For arts performance standard alignments at specific grade levels, feel free to email programs@snowcityarts.org.)

ILLINOIS ARTS LEARNING STANDARDS

Anchor Standards: Creating

- **CR1.** Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standards: Performing, Presenting, Producing

- **PR6.** Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

Anchor Standards: Connecting

- **CN11.** Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS

English Language Arts: College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards

Reading

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.4.** Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.R.5.** Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

Language

- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.3.** Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
- **CCSS.ELA-Literacy.CCRA.L.6.** Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

Standards for Mathematical Practice

- **SMP4.** Model with mathematics.





If you are interested in **receiving school credit** for the work you have completed in this workshop or if you would like to **have your artwork displayed** in a Snow City Arts exhibition space or virtual gallery, please visit <https://snowcityarts.org/consent-releases/>

Contact us at programs@snowcityarts.org if you have questions, would like to offer feedback, or would like to continue working with us virtually.





Workshop Duration: 25-45 Minutes | ALL LEVELS



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Snow City Arts inspires and educates children and youth in hospitals through the arts.

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or would like to offer feedback at
programs@snowcityarts.org

