
Title	A simple song
Author(s)	Choo, Helen
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A SIMPLE SONG

I was asked to conduct one two-hour session on Social Studies (the History component) to two groups of 1st Year Certificate in Education students. The topic for the session was **teaching methods in History**. I conducted a self-contained session that needed no follow-up.

The inspiration for the session came when I looked at the guidelines given by the Ministry of Education on teaching methods:

Teaching Strategies

- 1 The Social Studies syllabus should not be thought of in terms of information to be passed on didactically by the teacher to the pupils. Rather it seeks to inculcate certain values in the pupils through developing knowledge, skills and attitudes as they explore History and Geography.
- 2 Teachers will therefore need to vary their teaching strategies to make Social Studies attractive, effective and meaningful. Strategies such as projects, quizzes, simulation games, field trips, films, talks, debates, surveys and reports should be employed.

I noticed that the use of songs was missing as a possible teaching strategy. There could be good reasons for it yet I am confident that singing is an activity highly enjoyed by and attractive to the pupils. At the same time, I know that many children love to memorise songs and so the information contained in the songs will not escape them.

I decided to conduct an "experiment" with my class. I gave them an hour to come up with songs related to the pioneers of Singapore and ended with a short concert at the end of the session during which everyone had to come to the front of the class to sing their song.

The aim was two-fold:

- to demonstrate that it is not difficult or too time consuming for teachers to come up with songs for their classes; and
- to demonstrate that learning through songs is effective and enjoyable.

The “experiment” was a success. The students broke up into groups of five or six and each group put up one item at the end of the one hour.

Here are four of the songs reproduced without any alteration in order to demonstrate to the reader how easy it is. There are some mistakes, but these are first drafts.

I am sure the reader can use them creatively.

by Helen Choo Chieh Chen

TAN TOCK SENG (Tune: Clementine)

Tan Tock Seng, Tan Tock Seng
 He's a man from Malacca
 He sold fruits and vegetables
 In a shop in Singapore (Chorus)

Diseases were spreading all around
 So he started a hospital
 To cure smallpox and cholera
 And a cure for leprosy (Chorus)

Formerly it was at Pearl's Hill
 But the soldiers took over
 So it shifted to Serangoon
 And later to Moulmein Road (Chorus)

CHORUS
 Oh our pioneer (3)
 Tan Tock Seng
 Was a great man
 During his time
 Oh our pioneer
 Tan Tock Seng

NARAYANA PILLAY (Tune: Happy Wanderer)

Came from Penang with Raffles
 First worked as a chief of clerk
 First Indian building contractor, who built those brick houses

CHORUS

Narayana(3)
 Narayana Pillay
 Narayana(2)
 Who built those brick houses

That fatal day of his life, when all his goods caught fire
 Then Raffles took pity on him and lent him some money

CHORUS

Narayana(3), Narayana Pillay. Narayana(2)
 His cotton goods caught fire

And with the money, he made some more
 And soon he built a school
 He also gave some land for free
 To build Sri Mariamman Temple

CHORUS .

Narayana(3), Narayana Pillay. Narayana(2)
 He was a generous man.

PIONEERS OF SINGAPORE (Tune: One Way Ticket)

One way ticket (6) to Singapore
 They all came from various countries
 Got a place here and never went back
 Ooh . . . they were pioneers of Singapore . . .

They were Narayana Pillay
 Syed Omar
 Tan Tock Seng and Alex Guthrie
 Ooh . . . They all helped to build up Singapore . . .

And from them came a temple and a mosque
 Schools and hospitals too
 Roads were built and trade increased
 And ships came from everywhere

REPEAT CHORUS

JOSE D'ALMEIDA (Tune: Lacuceracha)

Jose D'Almeida, D'Almeida
He came from Portugal
He was a doctor (2)
And he helped to heal the people

He had a trading firm
Dealing with coffee and spices
He was a leader
of the Portuguese and Spaniards

So remember him (2)
He's Doctor D'Almeida
So don't forget him (2)
For the great things he has done

OLE!