

LET'S GET SINGING!

E Lanu Moana

by Elisha Fa'i-So'oialo (used with permission)

E lanu moana ma olaola le vasa o Samoa

Blue and vibrant is the sea of Samoa

E lanu samasama ma olaola le la o Samoa

Yellow and vibrant is the sun of Samoa

E lanu meamata ma olaola la'au o Samoa

Green and vibrant are the trees of Samoa

E fiafia tele ma olaola tagata o Samoa

Very happy and vibrant are the people of Samoa

This pese (song) written by Elisha Fa'i-So'oialo extols the beauty of Samoa's landscape and people.

About the presenter/composer



Currently residing in Rotorua, New Zealand-born Samoan, Elisha Fa'i-So'oialo enjoys a busy and fulfilling career as a secondary school music and singing teacher, and as a freelance classical singer, composer, vocal tutor and choral director.

Warm-ups

Warm-ups help to prepare us physically, vocally and mentally for singing. They relax our bodies, help us build healthy vocal production and sharpen our minds.

Physical/Mental

1 Breathing exercise

Objective: relaxing the body, calming the mind. This exercise will help students to clear their minds and settle their bodies and breath. Breathe low in the body, keep shoulders down and bodies relaxed. Elisha uses the phrase 'Hā ki roto, hā ki waho' (breathe in, breathe out) for this warm-up.

Vocal

2 Zing Zing Zaa

Objective: vocal range and agility. This exercise will help students to feel more confident about accessing the upper part of their vocal range. There are two phrases in this exercise. The first phrase has a stepping up and stepping down pattern. Use the consonant 'zzz' to spring into singing. Energise each note as you sing. The second phrase uses a longer 5-note sequence or scale. The melody goes a little higher each time it is sung. Keep the sound connected and smooth – as if each note joins on to the next one without stopping.

Physical/Mental

3 Samoan call: Mili pati

Objective: concentration, listening, energising. This exercise will require students to pay close attention to the leader and respond collectively. Being part of an ensemble, or musical team, helps students develop confidence and collaborative skills.

Mili – rub hands together

Pati/a – clap once with flat palms

Lua pati – clap twice with flat hands

Leader calls Hei! Hei! Group responds Hou!

Samoaan vocabulary

Pese – song

Pātē – Samoan log drum. These types of drums are popular throughout the Pacific.

Teaching notes

- Take care to learn the pronunciation of the Samoan language accurately. Where you have access to expertise, call on students and your school community to help. Repeat the relevant sections of the video as often as you need to feel confident. Draw the children's attention to the fact that the structure of the sentence is repeated each time, with a new colour and a new subject/noun added.
- The vocal quality is light and flowing. Don't push for a loud sound. Make each musical line smooth and connected.

What else could you do with this song?

Extension/Curricular links

- This pese teaches several colours in Samoan – blue, yellow, green – and nouns for sea, sun, trees and people. Extend this by developing more vocabulary. Perhaps you could create a colour chart that explores the words of colours in a variety of different languages.
- Use the song structure to create new lyrics about other places in other languages.
- These text improvisation activities and vocabulary development ideas would be great ways of connecting with language weeks throughout the year. Additionally, connect with the heritage languages of the students in your class.
- Use the lyrics as an inspiration for visual art activities.
- Dance/actions – Elisha has included some simple dance actions in the video but this is something you could develop. Please ensure that actions are created and led by someone confident in Samoan dance. Actions added should create a positive experience for children to learn Samoan dance alongside Samoan pese/song.
- Feel free to add another drum beat and drum to the piece such as the wooden drum/pātē to enhance the joy and energy.

Glossary of musical terms

Ensemble	A musical group or team, usually of more than ten. Groups smaller than this have names according to the size of the group eg. duo (2), trio (3), quartet (4), quintet (5). Ensembles can be instrumental or vocal.
Melody	A series of notes/pitches that make up a tune.
Phrase	A musical sentence.
Rhythm	The pattern of long and short sounds move the music forward through time. In a song, the rhythm is the pattern of the words.
Scale	A sequence of notes/pitches that follow a particular pattern or structure. There are lots of different types of scales.

Important messages

- Singing is fun!
- It is important for the health of children's voices that they are singing in a pitch range that is not too low.
- Never louder than beautiful. Let the natural beauty of children's voices shine. Understand that the volume they produce is directly proportional to their age, size and stage of development. Encourage healthy singing, not shouting.
- Singing voice, speaking voice, whispering voice – we can use our vocal mechanism in different ways. Ensure that children are using their voices in a 'singing' way. A light and ringing sound will help protect young voices from overuse and possible damage.
- Our body is our instrument. That means that no two voices will sound the same – we are each unique!
- We need our whole body to sing – energy, breath, posture, expression as well as a singing voice.
- Again – Singing is fun! And important! And good for us! Singing every day will energise you and your students.