



**American Orff-Schulwerk Association**  
147 Bell Street Suite 300; Chagrin Falls, OH 44022  
440.600.7328. [www.aosa.org](http://www.aosa.org)

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## **AOSA Song Selection Statement**

AOSA is committed to a diverse repertoire of music that strives to encompass and respect the cultural backgrounds, lifestyles, and genders of our students, teachers, and members. As music educators, we have a responsibility to carefully consider the materials we share with our students.

It is critical for teachers to understand the implicit biases and stereotypes expressed in many traditional and children's songs, and to continually reassess the appropriateness of curricular materials, regardless of their familiarity, ubiquity in song collections, inherent musical value, and/or utility for teaching specific skills and concepts. It is equally important for teachers to recognize the cultural context in relation to current understandings; songs we know and love often have complex histories and may no longer be appropriate for our classrooms.

In our analysis, we must actively investigate the historical context of the music and the underlying subtext of every song we teach. In addition, we must be careful not to make assumptions that lead to blanket acceptance or rejection of specific resources, but rather to assess each song on its own.

Teachers should consider the implications of a song through the lens of:

- Race
- Gender
- Religion
- Culture
- Ethnicity
- Gender Identity
- Sexual Orientation

In addition, consider:

- Child-appropriate subject matter
- Source
  - Cross-referencing from more than one source is important
  - Be mindful of the source's validity
- Cultural context – when was it performed; what was its purpose?
- Who sang this song originally and what was their perspective?
- Is this song sacred to a specific culture, and/or would it require a culture bearer to be performed authentically?

This is not a comprehensive list. This work is ongoing and AOSA is committed to providing teaching and learning resources that respect, affirm, and protect the dignity and worth of all. We consider this to be the start of a conversation that will continue to develop over time.