



conch shell  
recorded wave sounds

# Tongo

Polynesia

arr: LJClare 2013

Row to the sound of waves, and call out to friends near by! --a work song from Polynesia.

Key Dm first note F(mi)  
a cappella count-in: 1 2 1 2 Ton...  
Minor Pentatonic (do mi fa so ti do)

## Tongo

Rowing Song  
Polynesia  
arr: LJ Clare 2013

Ton - go\_\_ Ton - go\_\_ Chim-ney bye\_\_ bye\_\_ o

Chim-ney bye\_\_ bye\_\_ o Ton - go\_\_ Ton - go\_\_ Ton - go\_\_

Oo- a - way ko - a - way Oo - a - way

Oo - a - way Ba - lay ka - low a - way Ba - lay ka - low a - way

\*tongo = mangrove

In Polynesia, paddlers often sing to each other across the water. The form of their song is Call and Response(a traditional echo song), with one voice taking the lead. As in many work songs, the rhythm keeps the paddlers in sync, while the singing helps to carry the load. The sound at the beginning of the recording mimics the sound of a person blowing through a conch shell --an early musical instrument.

# B New Song: Tongo

The form of "Tongo" provides an easy way to learn it. The pentatonic pitches offer a multitude of ways to arrange the singing.

1 Polynesia is an area in the South Pacific Ocean that includes over 1,000 islands. Imagine yourself in a boat, and just over there (point to something on far side of room), your friend is in another boat. You are too far apart to talk easily, so as you paddle, this is what you do. (play the song)



Play Music Tongo sing-a-long recording

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**2** “At the beginning of the song there was a sound that kept going. Any ideas as to what the sound was from?”  
(ocean waves)

“What is going to make this song easy to learn?”  
(its all echos)

“Ready to paddle? Be the echo. Here we go ...”  
(play music)



**Play Music** **Tongo** sing-a-long recording

**3** Before class time, choose at least two of the following videoclips to show. There are guiding questions on each video.

“This is a folk song from Polynesia. That means people have been singing it for so long, it has become part of the life of the community there. Musicians who are not from Polynesia arrange the echos in different ways.

“Your challenge is to watch and listen to these students perform “Tongo” and try to find ideas you like and that maybe we could use.”



**Play Video**  
mp4

**Tongo**

**Performance Clips**

**1**

Coro infantil del conservatorio de musica de Lugo  
Lugo, Spain  
Tongo --singing

**2**

Royal Conservatoire Antwerp  
Conductor: Marleen DeBoo  
Tongo --movement with singing

**3**

the Conservatory Children’s Choir  
Conductor: Yasmina Sabbah  
Tongo --clapping with singing

**3** Guide students through exploring the ideas they garnered through watching different groups of students perform “Tongo”. List ideas that might be incorporated by a class performance.

**4** Engage students in deciding the arrangement they want to use for singing “Tongo”. Practice the arrangement.

**OR** Simply enjoy singing through “Tongo” using the videosong included with CanDoMusic.