



AMERICAN SONGBAG

Art Form: Music

Style: Folk

Culture: American

Technical Needs

- ❑ 2 Microphones (1 for vocal, 1 for guitar)
- ❑ A sturdy table

Meet the Artist

Carol Weston is a singer whose has a wide breadth of musical experiences. She plays for schools, libraries, and family events through Midwest, and has performed at the Taste of Chicago, Millennium Park, Great America, and Navy Pier. Additionally, she performs for audiences throughout Chicago, singing and playing piano in such places as the Drake Hotel, Cité Restaurant atop Lake Point Tower, Buckingham's at the Conrad Hilton and Towers, and various other private and public venues. She has also appeared at the Royal George Theatre as part of the Chicago Cabaret Professionals' music series.

Weston is not only a performer; she is also a teacher who holds a B.A. in elementary education and an M.A. in special education. She has conducted music workshops for teachers working with children, as well as guitar classes for adults and children at The Old Town School of Folk Music. In each residency, Weston brings her singing voice and folk guitar and engages the students in singing, clapping, body movement and rhythms, while introducing them to playing and making various instruments.

About the Performance

Ms. Weston will be performing songs from her American songbook that she has collected over her years as a folk musician. In addition to singing and playing

acoustic guitar, she will introduce students to other fascinating aspects of folk cultures from around the world, including the banjo, mbira and Limberjacks. *The American Songbag* is a sing-a-long, foot-stompin good time for all ages that includes many all-American favorites and familiar show tunes.

Contextual Information

Music is such an integral part of our lives and something to which children respond openly and freely. Songs, rhythms, and melodies all give children opportunities for expression through singing, listening, songwriting, and body movements. Music is an art form that allows positive feedback and success on even basic levels. The participation in and sheer enjoyment of music breeds success and develops a stronger self-image. Music, especially folk music, is a reflection of a people's experience, history, joys, sorrows, struggles, and accomplishments. Folk music often represents people who came from distant shores to make a new home. Singing together and making music together helps understand each other and who we are as a country.

Vocabulary

- Acoustic:** Not amplified; acoustic instruments play on their own and do not need electricity
- Banjo:** An instrument that has a round body, a long neck, and five strings played by plucking the strings
- Beat:** The pronounced rhythm that is the characteristic driving force in jazz or rock music
- Guitar:** A guitar is played by plucking or strumming the strings; some kinds of guitars use electricity
- Limberjack:** A doll that dances on a paddle; limberjacks are a part of the Appalachian culture
- Mbira:** Thumb-piano; the mbira was originally an African instrument but the folk culture of Appalachia started using it as well
- Melody:** A sweet or agreeable arrangement of sounds
- Rhythm:** The aspect of music comprising all the elements (such as accent, meter, and tempo) that relate to forward movement

String instrument: Any musical instrument that is played by plucking or strumming strings; the strings are stretched tight, but they cannot be struck (like a piano, which is a percussion instrument)

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