

STO LAT

Traditional Polish (Arr: Ula Weber)



ABOUT THIS SONG

Sto Lat is a traditional Polish song sung at celebration events such as birthdays and weddings. The words translate as 'may you live a hundred years'. It is also sung to celebrate achievements so it will often be heard at the end of a concert or a speech. Over the years, people have added several variations of Sto Lat, so nowadays singing the song on someone's birthday could take a while! Included here is the original version of Sto Lat and a well-known and simple variation.

THEMES/SUBJECTS

Folk song/celebration

CURRICULUM KEY LINKS

Languages, Literacy & Communication
Humanities

DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Vocal range

An 11th

Vocal format

Unison/harmony, variations

Musical elements

Structure and rhythm

Musical characteristics

Simple phrases and sequences

Warm-up Exercises

- Choose a short consonant sound from the song (use the phonetics guide overleaf) and say it 8 times, to a steady pulse. Repeat with different consonants and letter strings taken from the lyrics, eg. cz, ź, ch, etc...
- Chew an imaginary piece of bubblegum. Pretend to stretch the gum and make some sirening sounds (slide around the vocal range, like an air siren) using different vowels. This helps learners to access their higher singing voice.
- Sing the words 'sto lat' on one note. Repeat one note higher and keep going up and down the scale (you could try going up 5 notes or an octave, which is 8 notes). Sing this scale a few times, each time starting a little higher and faster.
- Polish requires good diction so encourage learners to move their mouths, lips and teeth. Try asking learners to put their index fingers (like imaginary 'cocktail sticks') against the side of their lips and nose. In order for the Polish words to be understood clearly, those 'cocktail sticks' need to move lots when singing.
- Here's a phonetic pronunciation of the words:

Sto lat, sto lat, nye-ch jee-ye, jee-ye nam

Sto lat, sto lat, nye-ch jee-ye, jee-ye nam

Yesh-che raz, yesh-che raz, nye-ch jee-ye, jee-ye nam

Nye-ch jee-ye nam.

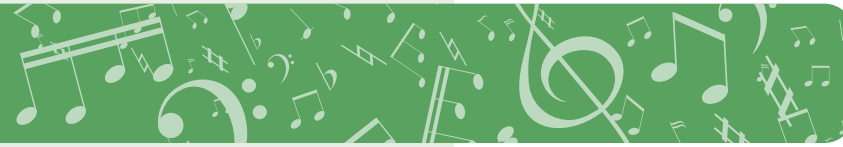
Suggested key links with other Areas, cross-cutting themes and/or local, national and international contexts

- This is a traditional Polish celebration song. Find out more about other traditional Polish celebration days such as Wianki and Independence Day.
- Many Polish people are named after Saints and often these Name Days have a celebratory emphasis greater than birthdays! Discover more about Name Days and the different Feast Days linked to them. Do you share a name with a Polish Saint?
- Dewi Sant and Santes Dwynwen are two Saints linked to Wales. Can you discover more about the different Polish Saints. Do they have any similarities to other Saints you know of?

GRADING: INTERMEDIATE

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Teaching and Learning

In Polish there are no diphthongs so all the vowel sounds are closed and bright (think back to initial phonics learning):

a = cat, bad

e = bed, said

i = seat, fleet

o = got, hot

u = book (but with lips pushed forward on the 'oo' sound)

y = bit, sit

In Sto Lat, there are a couple of letters and letter strings which have their own sound:

ch = diolch (Welsh), loch (Scottish)

ż = as in the French word 'je' but with lips pushed forwards.

j = yet, you

sz = sh (but with lips pushed forward)

cz = church, cheese (but with lips pushed forward)

'R's' are rolled if immediately followed by a vowel.

- 1 If you have a Polish speaker in your group, encourage them to help you teach the song as they are likely to know it.
- 2 Choose 'Part 1 only' and listen to the learning track a few times until you are confident with the tune and the lyrics.
- 3 Use 'my turn, your turn' to teach the Polish words in the rhythm of the melody. Do this line by line.
- 4 Teach the first phrase to 'do' or 'la' and encourage learners to watch you on the pause so everyone comes off the note together. Try adding the words.
- 5 Next sing the second phrase and notice how this phrase is nearly the same as the first, but one step lower. Add the words to this line.
- 6 Continue learning the remaining phrases to 'la' or 'do' and once confident, add the words and sing through the whole song.
- 7 Finally, try singing the whole song in Polish in unison.

Integral Skills

Once learners are confident singing the melody, try adding the Variation:

- Choose 'Part 1 only'. Listen to the learning track a few times until you are confident with the melody and the lyrics. Notice that the lyrics are almost the same except for the word 'niechaj' (pronounced 'nye-hi').
- Begin by playing the learning track and invite everyone to clap or tap to the pulse of the song.
- Ask learners to clap the rhythm of the tune (Part 1). Divide the class into two groups and ask one group to clap the rhythm of the melody whilst the other group taps the pulse.
- Teach the melody (Part 1) and sing it to 'la' whilst clapping or tapping the pulse.
- Once you and the learners are confident with the melody add the Polish words.

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Statements of what matters:

- *Exploring the expressive arts is essential to developing artistic skills and knowledge and it enables learners to become curious and creative individual*
- *Creating combines skills and knowledge, drawing on the senses, inspiration and imagination*

- Learn the harmonies. Start by adding the second part. Choose 'Part 2' and play it to the learners. Learn the song line by line using the 'I sing, you sing,' method if you are confident doing this. Otherwise play the track line by line and toggle back for learners to sing along with it.
- Repeat this method to learn the third part. Choose 'Part 3' on the drop down menu. Encourage learners not to use 'shouty' voices as this part may be low in their vocal range.
- Once confident with all three parts, split the class into three and assign a voice part to each group. Start by humming their parts quietly and listening carefully to each other. Add the words and sing the song as a whole choosing 'Full track'.
- For a challenge, learn Parts 2 and Part 3 for the Variation as well. Notice that some notes in the harmony parts are staccato and should be sung short and separated. However, the final three notes in the harmony parts are no longer staccato and should be sung smoothly.

Assessment for Learning:

- *Responding and reflecting, both as artist and audience, is a fundamental part of learning in the expressive arts*

Questioning

Tool: No hands-up approach

- Give me an example of a rhythm introduced in this song. Is this a dotted or a straight rhythm?
- How could we improve our overall performance?
- How else can we perform this song?
- What is the impact of the repeated lyric at the start of each phrase?

Feedback

Tool: Comments Only

Give specific feedback to groups on their attention to rhythm. You may need to demonstrate the dotted rhythms at the beginning of the first phrase and the long held note that follows.

Self- and peer assessment

Tool: Learner-to-learner dialogue

Ask learners to take it in turns to be the teacher when discussing the performance and to ask questions. You may need to give them some suggestions of possible questions, for example:

- Was this a hard or easy song to learn? Why?
- What do you like/dislike about this song?