

## Dancing Hands By Margarita Engle



**Vocabulary**

lullabies	waltz
bursts	sonata
cathedral	orchestra
oddities	weariness

### SAMPLE DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES

#### Building and Connecting Background Knowledge

To support meaningful engagement with this text, connect to what students already know and have experienced, and build background in the following areas:

- Music can communicate feelings, tell stories, and bring people together. Invite students to think about how music is used in their own lives, families, or communities.
- People move for many reasons, including safety, opportunity, or change. Moving to a new place can bring excitement, but also feelings of loss, loneliness, or uncertainty. Invite students to share experiences they might have with moving to a new place.
- The story takes place during a time of war, including the Venezuelan Federal War and the American Civil War. During this time, the country experienced conflict, loss, and change, which affected everyday life for many people.

#### During Reading

As you read, invite students to notice how Teresa's experiences change over time. Pause and ask:

- What is changing for Teresa right now? How is she responding to that change?

Remind students that in picture books, both the words and illustrations help tell the story.

Pause and ask:

- What do you notice in the illustration? What do the pictures show that the words do not? How do the colors or images help you understand the mood?

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### Extension Activities

#### Music and Mood

Students choose one descriptive passage (e.g., birds, jaguars, storm, or performance scene).

- Illustrate the scene focusing on mood, movement, and imagery
- Write a descriptive paragraph explaining how specific words from the text influenced their artwork

#### Mapping Teresa's Journey

Using a world map, students trace Teresa's journey from Venezuela to New York and Washington, D.C., and extend her travels using information from the Historical Note (including Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa).

- As a class, conduct brief research to explore where she performed in Europe (specific countries or cities)
- Label key locations and add short notes about what Teresa experienced or accomplished in each place.

#### SEL Connection

Self-Management & Perseverance – Teresa continues to practice and perform even when she faces challenges, such as moving to a new place or playing on an imperfect piano. Students can reflect on how persistence, focus, and adaptability support growth and help them navigate challenges.

### Identifying Cultural Behaviors

Cultural Behavior	Examples from the Text
<b>Immediacy:</b> Actions that all at once communicate warmth, acceptance, closeness, and availability.	When Teresa plays for others, her music creates a sense of closeness and shared emotion, even across differences in language or background. Her performance brings people together in the moment, offering comfort and connection during times of uncertainty.
<b>Spontaneity:</b> Comfort level found in environments and contexts that are marked by impulse and improvisation. This includes the tendency to respond as coming from or resulting from an immediate or natural impulse	During her performance, Teresa adapts to a poorly tuned piano by improvising and adjusting her playing in real time. This reflects a comfort with flexibility and creative response, where expression is shaped by the moment rather than fixed or predetermined.

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Activity	CLR Protocol
<p><b>Responsive Literacy</b></p>	<p><b>Connections Grid</b></p> <p>Students use their thoughts, annotations or notes and pull out key ideas &amp; vocabulary after reading to support collaborative summarizing &amp; synthesizing.</p> <p>Students create a tic-tac-toe grid and fill it with nine key words or ideas from the text (teacher models a few to start). Then they write sentences connecting three words in a row (across, down, or diagonal) and share one with the class.</p> <p><i>Validate and Affirm (VA) Collaboration, Communalism, Sociocentrism</i>  <i>BB Responsive Literacy</i></p>
<p><b>During Reading</b></p>	<p><b>Musical Shares</b></p> <p>A movement/discussion protocol where students can move/dance and discuss content to get multiple perspectives. Teacher asks a question and gives students a chance to think or respond independently. Next, teacher plays music (play <u>Teresa Carreño's</u> music). Students walk, dance, or "wance". When the music stops they discuss with the person closest to them. Repeat 1-2 x and use an involuntary response protocol such as Wheel of Names for sharing.</p> <p><i>Validate and affirm (VA) Dynamic Attention Span, Musicality, Communalism, Sociocentricism, Kinesthetic/Movement, Collaboration</i></p>
<p><b>Responding Protocol</b></p>	<p><b>BINGO (80% involuntary)</b></p> <p>Bingo Responding is a great Involuntary Responding Protocol to bring accountability &amp; increase engagement when students are in a Discussion or Movement Protocol. Number off desks in your room or have students pick a Bingo Number as they enter. That is their number for the class period or for the day.</p> <p>After a Discussion Protocol or Movement Protocol, use Bingo Responding to hear a few responses from students.</p> <p><i>Validate and Affirm (VA) Sociocentrism; Communalism, Subjectiveness, and Collaboration</i>  <i>Builds and bridges (BB) Precise time, Turn Taking</i></p>