



Conversational Solfege Supplement

(Last updated: May 28, 2022)

In the summer of 2020, GIA Publications, in collaboration with the Feierabend Association for Music Education (FAME), revised the *First Steps in Music* curriculum to remove all songs with racist histories and/or those that were otherwise deemed to be harmful, derogatory, or disrespectful, therefore making them unfit for use with children.

GIA Publications is revising the *Conversational Solfege* curriculum (Levels 1–3), along with the coordinating “Book of” books, to remove any racist, derogatory, and/or problematic repertoire. This document lists the songs that will be removed from the curriculum in future printings.

We are providing this information so that teachers may make informed decisions about the repertoire they use with their students. Fortunately, the majority of songs in the curriculum will remain, giving teachers plenty of musically rich and pedagogically appropriate songs from which to choose for each unit.

We further recognize that our understanding of folk repertoire is constantly evolving, and we continue to research the histories and contexts of these songs to determine their appropriateness for inclusion in the curriculum. The contents of this document are subject to change as we learn more, and we will provide updates as necessary.

Songs to Be Removed

Conversational Solfege Level 1

Juba	Unit 1	Used in minstrelsy.
Mother May I Go Out?	Unit 4	Used in minstrelsy.
'Possum Up a Gum Tree	Unit 4	Used in minstrelsy.

Conversational Solfege Level 2

Camptown Races	Unit 10	Written by minstrel composer Stephen Foster and used in minstrel performance; dialect is deliberately intended to mock Black dialect.
Jim Along Josie	Unit 5	Written by minstrel composer Edward Harper and used in minstrel performance; original lyrics contain racial slurs and allusions.
Juba	Unit 11	Used in minstrelsy.
My Dog Blue	Unit 7	Used in minstrelsy.
No One's in the House	Unit 5	The term “Dinah” was used as an unflattering and offensive caricature of an African American woman.
Old Aunt Dinah	Unit 5	The term “Dinah” was used as an unflattering and offensive caricature of an African American woman.
One Wide River	Unit 13	Used in minstrelsy. Variants contain dialect intended to mock Black dialect.

'Possum Up a Gum Tree	Unit 6	Used in minstrelsy.
Shortnin' Bread	Unit 10	Variants contain racial slurs; derogatory toward African Americans.
Sweetest Little Baby	Units 5, 6	Text uses the offensive "Mammy" caricature.
Three Fishermen	Unit 11	Early variants are explicitly derogatory towards the Jewish faith.
Workin' on the Railroad	Unit 11	Associated with minstrelsy. Variants contain offensive racial slurs and the "Dinah" trope (<i>see above</i>).

Conversational Solfege Level 3

CAFFEE (<i>see also</i> Coffee Canon)	Unit 22	Derogatory towards Muslims and Turks.
Chicken on a Fence Post	Unit 14	Variants contain racial slurs derogatory toward African Americans.
Christopher Columbus	Unit 25	Romanticizes the Columbus expedition, which led to the genocide and enslavement of Indigenous populations in the Americas.
Coffee Canon (<i>see also</i> CAFFEE)	Unit 15	Derogatory towards Muslims and Turks.
Jim Along Josie	Units 14, 16	Written by minstrel composer Edward Harper and used in minstrel performance; original lyrics contain racial slurs and allusions.
No One's in the House	Unit 14	The term "Dinah" was used in minstrel performances as an unflattering and offensive caricature of an African American woman.
Taffy Was a Welshman	Unit 14	Derogatory towards the Welsh.

The Book of Canons

Kaffee (Coffee)	p. 70	Derogatory towards Muslims and Turks.
The Stuttering Man	p. 74	Insensitive to students with a stutter.

The Book of Song Dances

Shoo Fly	p. 21	Derogatory towards African Americans. Originated in minstrelsy.
Sandy Land	p. 41	Derogatory towards African Americans.
John Kanaka	p. 62	"Kanaka" is an offensive racial slur for Pacific Islanders.
Old Dan Tucker	p. 64	Popular in minstrelsy. Early variants use language derogatory to African Americans.
Skip to My Lou	p. 66	Variants contain language derogatory to African Americans.
Jimmy Crack Corn	p. 88	Popularized in minstrelsy. Variants contain language derogatory to African Americans.
Buffalo Gals	p. 98	Originated in minstrelsy. Adult theme: prostitution.
Oh Susanna	p. 108	Written by Stephen Foster. Used in minstrelsy. Original lyrics derogatory to African Americans and mock Black dialect.
Polly Wolly Doodle	p. 109	Used in minstrelsy.
Turkey in the Straw	p. 118	Used in minstrelsy. Original lyrics mock Black dialect.

The Book of Song Tales

Waggle Taggle G*psies	p. 32	"G*psy" is an offensive term for the Roma people.
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Bluetail Fly	p. 38	Popularized in minstrelsy. Variants contain the n-word. Lyrics use a mocking Black dialect.
Cat Came Back	p. 66	Derogatory to African Americans. Original lyrics use mocking Black dialect.

The Book of Playground Songs and Rhymes

My Mother Said	p. 36	G*psy is an offensive term for the Roma people.
Two Little Monkeys	p. 38	Original version uses the n-word.
See Saw	p. 51	Variants contain lyrics that make light of slavery.
Eskimo, Eskimo, Eskimo Pie	p. 52	“Eskimo” is considered by many Native Alaskans to be offensive and unacceptable because it is a term imposed by non-Indigenous people.
G*psy, G*psy Lived in a Tent	p. 62	G*psy is an offensive term for the Roma people.
Eenie, Meenie, Minie, Mo	p. 71	Early U.S. variants use the n-word instead of “tiger” or “thief.”
Eenie, Meenie, Tipsie, Teenie	p. 71	Removed for its similarities to “Eenie, Meenie, Minie, Mo”