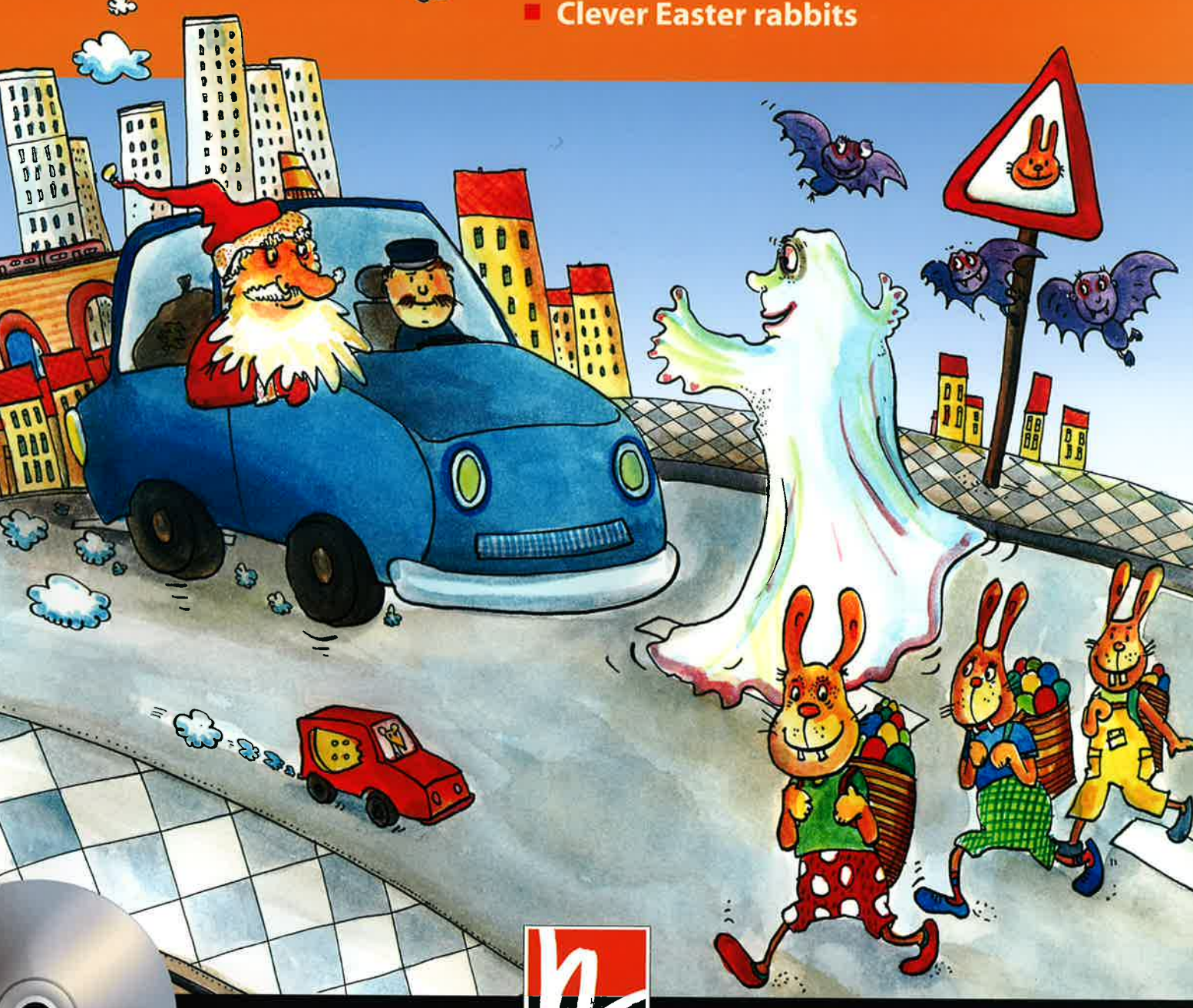
Günter Gerngross • Anette Claus • Uli Führe

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Act&Sing

3 mini-musicals for young learners

- Halloween
- Where's your ticket, Father Christmas?
- Clever Easter rabbits



With Audio CD

HELBLING LANGUAGES

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Introduction

Musical plays in primary schools

When children are involved in doing theatre, visual, auditory and also kinaesthetic/motor channels of perception are activated. The children see, hear and act. They learn to communicate with the involvement of gestures and mimes. This type of multisensory learning promotes the retention of content. It is also very motivating for them to perform in front of an audience. They are using the foreign language with a clear aim, so are particularly willing to learn sections of a script and repeatedly practise and correct the pronunciation of foreign words and sentences.

While working on *musical plays* children act as a group. They learn to work with each other, to be considerate and to listen to each other, in other words to develop and reinforce social skills. *Musical plays* offer, particularly to those children who are shy about learning a foreign language, an opportunity to present their own personality in a fictional character. In addition, the performance promotes not only the speaking skills of the children but it also allows them to acquire so-called *presentation skills*.

The combination of music, language and action makes children express and challenge themselves within a musical context.

General performance instructions

The three musical plays presented here can be used during primary school. It is important that all children are involved either as actors or in the chorus. You can use these materials in different ways during the English lesson:

- **to perform mini-musicals either in class or as a stage performance:** the musical items can be accompanied either by using the appropriate playbacks and instrumental interludes on the CD or by the teacher with a guitar or piano/keyboard;
- **for a cross-curricular project in English and music:** the children perform and play using their musical instruments (Orff instruments can be used.)

The suggestions for costumes and stage design plus the stage directions are to be taken as ideas that have proved successful in practice. Add to, vary and change the suggestions according to your own ideas and, also those of the children, and adjust it to the circumstances of the class.

For dramatic reasons some of the listening scripts vary slightly from the printed script. This makes the stories understandable even without visual support.

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Guidelines on method

Preliminary preparation of vocabulary

To start off, use the relevant *picture dictionary* with the words in and copy one page between two children. Read out a word, and have the children point to the relevant picture *(listen and point)*. In most cases, the meaning of the word or a phrase becomes clear through the picture. Reinforce the meaning with gestures and mimes. You may need to translate a word if its meaning is not absolutely clear from the picture, e.g. *trip over* in the play *Halloween*.

After the *listen and point*, ask the children to close their eyes and listen very carefully. *(Close your eyes and listen. See the pictures on your inner TV.)* Then say the words again and ask the children to present the words or phrases with the aid of gestures and mimes. That concludes the language assimilation phase.

Prepare an OH slide from the photocopiable master *picture dictionary* without the words. Project it onto the screen and ask the children for the words.
If required, practise the pronunciation several times.
Next, have the children work in pairs with their copy of the *picture dictionary* (plus words). Pupil A covers up a word and Pupil B names it. Then they swap. With this partner exercise the preliminary preparation of the vocabulary is concluded.

Vocabulary revision

Make enough copies of the *picture dictionary* without the words to go round the class. The children write the words under the corresponding pictures.

Getting acquainted with the *musical play*

First of all introduce the characters in the story, e.g.: *We are going to listen to a musical play. There are six children, Father Christmas, a ticket inspector, an old man...* Now you have two options:

- Tell the story with the aid of gestures, mimes and the pictures in the *picture dictionary* (OH slide), e.g.: *Three Easter Bunnies are hiding eggs. Suddenly, they meet four foxes. The foxes are dancing. The Easter bunnies show them how to dance. The foxes take the basket with the eggs ...* Now you can play the full recording/listening version of the musical from the CD.
- Play the full recording/listening version of the play so the children can enjoy the various sound effects and the voices of the *native speakers*. The listening version differs slightly from the printed script in a few places for a better understanding of the text. Support the audio play if required with gestures and mimes. Next, ask the children to say words, phrases or sentences that they have remembered and write them on the board. Correct incorrect statements in the following way: say it is a good try and then repeat the sentence in the correct form. Do not go any further into the error.

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Next play the *musical play* scene by scene. Stop after each scene and read the script out slowly. The children follow using the scripts you have previously copied and given out.

Practising the scripts

The most important thing with memorising a role play is anchoring the text in the long-term memory. Varied tasks help children assimilate and retain the script. In the following you will find some tried and tested anchoring techniques:

- **Individual work:** The children read out their part several times in a low voice to themselves and read the script at the same time. With increasing security, their dependence on the printed word decreases.
- **Individual work:** Ask the children to mark their sections of the script. Next they cover up the whole script. By slowly pushing away the covering sheet, the script comes back into view. The children read along with it in a low voice. As soon as the pupil sees the start of a marked section of the script, he covers it up again and tries to reconstruct it from memory. If he does not succeed, he has another brief look at the line and tries again.
- **Pair work:** The children read out the lines that they have to learn to each other in a low voice. Then one child covers the first word of his line and tries to say the whole sentence to his partner. The partner follows on his sheet and corrects when mistakes occur. Two words are covered up, then three, etc. Gradually the pupil says the whole sentence from memory. After that the children swap roles.
- **Individual work:** When the children have mastered their script, they say their part several times noiselessly just moving their lips.

Tips on musical reinforcement

- The children listen to the songs several times. Then they practise the tunes and lyrics separately.
- Hum a tune with the children or sing it in syllables.
- Hum/sing a short section, the children repeat it and react to signs that you give, e.g. loud, quiet, staccato, legato,…
- Start humming part of a song, the children continue the tune.
- Say the lyrics to the rhythm of the song. Sing/write as a memory aid the contents of the song on the board, e.g.: *Ghosts and Monsters*: ghosts, monsters, witches, bats, ...
- Accompany the text, then the whole song by sound gestures, e.g. alternate between slapping the thigh and clapping.

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- Orff instrument sets are simply held and also playable with melody instruments. See if a music group in your school would like to take on this part.
- For a performance with playbacks, use the audio files on the CD. You can stop the playback and start it again with the pause button.

Tips for rehearsing and performing

- Before the rehearsal choose one child as prompter. Explain to the children that there will be no pauses during the rehearsal. Not even if mistakes are made.
- After each rehearsal it is a good idea to have a feedback session. The children talk in their mother tongue about what went well and what still needs improvement. Suggestions are made and checked for their practicability.
- Do not use the props and costumes until the children are confident about speaking.
- Before a performance, have a 'dress rehearsal' in front of another class. This will make students more confident about their speaking and acting and may encourage other classes to also do a play.

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Clever Easter rabbits

Length of performance:
Approximately 15 minutes

Cast

- Speaking parts: 5 Easter rabbits, 4 foxes, 1 cock
- Chorus: all participants

Instruments (as desired)mallet instruments, guitar or piano/keyboard

Materials

- Photocopiable masters: Picture Dictionary (p. 44/45), Music (p. 46-52), Script (p. 53-55), cut-out sheets for masks (p. 57-59), instructions for making fox and rabbit ears (p. 63)
- CD: Full recording (listening version of the play) No. 30, individual sections No. 31-41, instrumental items/playbacks No. 42-50

Required craft materials
Various colours of coloured card, elastic bands, glue, etc.



Story

Five Easter rabbits want to show four foxes that they are better dancers. While the rabbits are dancing, the foxes steal their egg basket. The Easter rabbits use a trick to get their stolen eggs back with an apparently dead cock as a decoy. The foxes leave their den, the cock is warned and escapes just in time. In the meantime, the Easter rabbits get their basket back and the children's Easter egg hunt is saved.

Participants

Speaking parts: : 5 Easter rabbits, 4 foxes, 1 cock
Chorus: all participants

Music

Playbacks or/and live instruments:
mallet instruments, guitar or piano/keyboard
CD: Full recording (listening version of the play) No. 30, individual sections, No. 31-41, instrumental items/playbacks No. 42-50

Tip: In the listening version there is a second instrumental piece called *Dog* (see Act & Sing 1, p. 33), plus a third - *Rabbit* printed on p. 51 of this book.

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Acting area and stage set

The chorus stand in two rows at the rear edge of the acting area. The distance between the rows is set in such a way that foxes and rabbits can get through.

Tips for decoration of the stage:

- stick flowers made of foam rubber or coloured paper onto kebab sticks and put them into a green oasis (at the edge of the stage).
- hang up lengths of material in spring colours with paper flowers on them
- make rabbit, cock or egg garlands as room decorations

Props

- 1 basket
- 1 green cloth
- draw 6 larger coloured eggs (20-30 cm high) on coloured card and cut out
- 5 coloured eggs for the basket (normal egg size): draw eggs on coloured cards and cut out; alternative: plastic eggs, (craft shop)

Masks and Costumes

- Masks for the rabbits, foxes and cock: photocopiable masters for the half-masks (pp. 57-59) plus instructions for making rabbit and fox ears p. 63.

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The play

30: Full recording (listening version of the play)

Introduction

All the participants are standing together with the chorus in a semi-circle at the front of the stage singing the Greeting song.



Greeting song

31
42 (Playback)

Chorus: Hello, hello,
good to see you.
Thanks for coming here today.
Hello, hello,
good to see you.
Here is our musical play.



Four groups from the chorus mime juggling with eggs. At the end of each verse one group sits down on the floor and rubs supposedly aching legs. In the last verse everyone carries out the actions described below sitting down.

Five little rabbits

32
43 (Playback)



Chorus: Five little rabbits
juggling twenty eggs.
Five fell down
and hit their legs.

Five little rabbits
juggling fifteen eggs.
Five fell down
and hit their legs.

Five little rabbits
juggling ten white eggs.
Five fell down
and hit their legs.

Five little rabbits
juggling five white eggs.
Five fell down
and hit their legs.



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Five little rabbits	*make rabbits' ears with hands on heads*
juggling no white eggs	*wave index finger backwards and forwards*
because all the eggs	*put index finger in the air*
have landed on their legs!	*index finger points to legs*
Yuck.	*stretch hands in the air*

After the song rabbit 1 stands up: 33

Rabbit 1: Stop that nonsense!
Chorus: OK.
Rabbit 2 *(stands up and fetches a basket that is standing ready at the edge, holds a painted egg in the air and says):*
Finished.
Rabbits 1–5 *(rabbits 3-5 stand up):* OK. Let's hide the eggs. Great!
Rabbit 3: Let's go.

The chorus now line up in two rows at the rear edge of the acting area. The distance between the rows is set in such a way that foxes and rabbits can get through.
The rabbit actors go into the middle of the stage. The four foxes remain standing between the chorus rows.



As soon as the dance music sounds starts, the four foxes make clumsy dance movements up to the rabbits.

Instrumental piece: Fox dance music 44

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Rabbits 1–5:	Good morning, foxes.
Fox 1 *(bows):*	Good morning, rabbits.
Rabbit 1:	Good morning.
Rabbit 2 :	What are you doing?
Fox 2:	We are dancing.
Rabbit 3:	Dancing?
Fox 3:	Yes, we are the best.
Rabbit 4 *(laughing):*	The best, heeheehee.
Rabbit 5 *(points to the rabbits):*	We will show you.
Fox 4:	Oh, show us then!
Rabbit 1:	OK. We will show you.



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Music

Hello, hello (Greeting song)

Lyrics: Günter Gerngross, Anette Claus
Music and Arrangement: Uli Führe
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31
42 (Playback)

Chorus

C F C Am G C G

Hel-lo, hel-lo, good to see you. Thanks for com-ing here to - day.

C F C Am G C

Hel-lo, hel-lo, good to see you. Here is our Mu - si - cal play.



Accompaniment

Intro

Melody instruments
Mallet instruments

C F C G C G C

Bass
Bass xylophone

Song

1. 2. D.C. Song

C F C Am G C G Am G C

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Five little rabbits

Lyrics: Günter Gerngross, Anette Claus
Music and Arrangement: Uli Führe
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32
43 (Playback)

Chorus

C F C
Five lit - tle rab - bits jug - gling twen - ty eggs.
Five lit - tle rab - bits jug - gling ten white eggs.

F C G C
Five fell down and hit their legs. Five lit - tle rab - bits
Five fell down and hit their legs. Five lit - tle rab - bits

F C F C Dm G C
jug - gling fif - teen eggs. Five fell down and hit their legs.
jug - gling five white eggs. Five fell down and hit their legs.

slower

Cm Fm Cm
Five lit - tle rab - bits jug - gling no white eggs, be -

Fm Cm G Cm
cause all the eggs have land - ed on their legs! Yuck!



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Play script



Introduction

Chorus: Hello, hello,
good to see you.
Thanks for coming here today.
Hello, hello,
good to see you.
Here is our musical play.

Scene A

Chorus: Five little rabbits
juggling twenty eggs.
Five fell down
and hit their legs.

Five little rabbits
juggling fifteen eggs.
Five fell down
and hit their legs.



Five little rabbits
juggling ten white eggs.
Five fell down
and hit their legs.

Five little rabbits
juggling five white eggs.
Five fell down
and hit their legs.

Five little rabbits
juggling no white eggs
because all the eggs
have landed on their legs!
Yuck.

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Rabbit 1: Stop that nonsense!
Chorus: OK.
Rabbit 2: Finished.
Rabbits 1–5: OK. Let's hide the eggs. Great!
Rabbit 3: Let's go.

Scene B



Rabbits 1–5: Good morning foxes.
Fox 1: Good morning rabbits.
Rabbit 1: Good morning.
Rabbit 2: What are you doing?
Fox 2: We are dancing.
Rabbit 3: Dancing?
Fox 3: Yes, we are the best.
Rabbit 4: The best, heeheehee.
Rabbit 5: We will show you.
Fox 4: Show us then!

Chorus: Hop and jump,
hop and jump,
hop to the left and
hop to the right.
Hop and jump,
hop and jump,
hop all day and night.
Hip, hip, hurray.



Rabbit 1: Where are the foxes?
Rabbit 2: And where are our eggs?
Rabbit 3: What shall we do?
Rabbit 4: I don't know.
Rabbit 5: I've got an idea.
Rabbit 1: Tell us.
Rabbit 5: Let's go to the hen house.
Rabbits 1–4: Yippee!



Scene C

Rabbit 5: Please, cock, can you help us?
Cock: No problem.
Rabbits 1–4: Thank you, cock. Let's go then.

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