

Hitting THE RIGHT KEY

Sing Your Way to Spanish CD is a hit with language teachers and students.



SPANISH

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useful," said Juan Provano, of Pembroke Pines, a Spanish teacher at Watkins Elementary in Pembroke Park. "Whenever music is involved they like it and they seem to grab the language."

"It's really good. I use it to enhance my Spanish classes and other resources, too," said Marta Perez, a Spanish teacher at Wilton Manors Elementary. She teaches reading and writing and said the CD makes the lessons a success.

Because the music allows teachers to fully engage children with singing and dancing, Dreher has found that even parents are using it while running errands or during long road trips.

But the CD became a true hit when Blanca Guerra, foreign language curriculum specialist for the district, lent a copy to her grandchildren, who refused to return it, Dreher said.

Guerra, who spends her time planning and helping the district with its language curriculum, helped Dreher sell the CD to the district.

"I presented it to the school system during the

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Go online to www.singyourwaytospanish.com or call Jody Dreher at 954-981-7278.

summer, and what is great about it is that teachers don't need to be able to sing, and the children don't care if anybody can keep a tune," Dreher said. "[Children] just want to use their bodies and learn. And when you have their emotions, you can keep their attention."

To help teachers reach their students, Dreher produced a workbook that contains lesson plans and other fun activities to engage children, whether they are fluent in Spanish or in English. She also created an educational bilingual play that will be performed at teachers' workshops and at several schools this summer and fall.

"All children learn in different ways and we can't control how to best access their learning ability, but they all love music. So it's a very universal medium for engaging children," said Dreher, who has begun production on a second album.

can memorize the words, even in a song," she said.

But creating the CD meant more than just singing into a microphone. During the course of her teaching career, Dreher had written more than 40 songs, but she had to condense them into one CD before she could offer it for use to the school district this school year.

The songs, which are sung in English and Spanish, teach vocabulary words and conversational phrases. Dreher said all the song lyrics are words and short phrases that make sense to use repeatedly, such as "Let's go! ¡Vámonos!" or "¡Buenos días! Good morning!" or "This tastes good! ¡Qué rico!"

"I started using songs that were already

children's songs, but I needed to teach words that they really wanted to say," Dreher said. "Kids don't live in an English-speaking world anymore and, by learning a second language, they increase their chances of being successful in years to come."

Bringing that success to the classroom is why Dreher encourages teachers to get creative with their lessons.

Teachers have found that students learn better with music as a guide.

"We are working on learning body parts so I'm using the CD with some of the songs and I can introduce vocabulary, which I find very

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BY ALEJANDRA DIAZ
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Elementary school children throughout Broward County are getting a dose of knowledge in a new way thanks to a CD sung and written by Jody Dreher.

Dreher, a 25-year veteran of the school system, created *Sing Your Way To Spanish*, a musical compilation that teaches children Spanish and English through song.

"I'm a real language lover and I have always been musical so it worked out as an interesting combination," said Dreher, 47, of Hollywood.

She created the CD after parents saw their children improve their language skills using the songs. "All kids love music, dance, and all kids